PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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WHAT'S AT STAKE IN BARANGAY POLLS

By Cyril L. Bonoan Jr. and Elisa R. Victoria
Inquirer Research

BENEFITS—MISCELLANEOUS BENEFITS, INSURANCE COVERAGE AND A SENSE OF POWER—THESE ARE THE ONES THAT ENTICE MANY OF THE COUNTRY'S ALMOST 300,000 BARANGAY OFFICIALS TO SEEK REELECTION.

Aside from the honorarium a barangay official receives (not less than P1,000 for the barangay chair and not less than P600 for each of the seven regular barangay council members and the Sangguniang Kabataan chair), he is entitled to:

- A Christmas bonus of at least P1,000.
- Insurance coverage (includes double-indemnity, death and burial).

SEE PAGE A-10

SPORTS / A27

Miñoza ends title drought in Japan; Pagunsan breaks thru

WORLD / A26

Turkey threatens incursion into northern Iraq

51M expected to vote today

By Inquirer Bureaus, Nikko Dizon and Leila B. Salaverria
in Manila

ONE CANDIDATE IS ALSO IN HARRIS FIRE

MAYNARD, but he is not the one you see on television crashing pissed dates. Another aspirant in Mindanao goes by the name of Ung Ho Suk, but he is far from being a contented cylinder.

In Catanduanes, an entire family is running for seats in separate villages.

In the Visayas, Commission on Elections (Comelec) officials mulled upon the name of a school teacher running for three positions in three different areas.

Probably, politicians in some villages are buying votes at the rate of P500 to P600 per ballot.

There are only some of the problems—and oddities—that the Comelec is expected to encounter as the bulk of the country's more than 51 million registered voters trek to the polls in its nationwide barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections today. (See related stories in Metro, Page A13.)

Since yesterday, the Philippine National Police has been on the highest security alert, warning the elections could be disrupted in some places by communist New People's Army (NPA) guerillas said to be backing some candidates.

Almost 1 million candidates are vying for nearly 417,000 posts in some 42,000 barangays.

PNP Director General Avelino Razon Jr. said the police were verifying intelligence reports that

3 EXPECTED TO

FAST FACTS

MANILA poll workers transport ballot boxes in precincts for today's exercise.

Estrada backs away from GMA-quit call

Rejects bid to set up transition government

By Jocelyn R. Uy

FORMER PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada yesterday distanced himself from fresh calls for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo sparked by the pardon she had granted the disgraced leader convicted of plunder.

"It's the people—the poor sector which is the largest part of our society who should choose and decide who they want to install replace the government, not the few elites and the chardonnay," Estrada told the Inquirer by phone.

On Friday, the ousted leader was given a new lease on life and walked out of Muntinlupa's Camp Bagong Diwa provisional prison where he had spent most of the six years he had been under house arrest, a few days after accepting executive clemency.

The pardon, which took the Estrada and Arroyo camps cited as a step toward national reconciliation, has triggered speculation that the 70-year-old political and showbiz leader is the instigator of the Pyramid and the setting up of a junta to be headed by Chief Justice Reynato Puno.

A Puno-led transition government also does not appeal to Estrada, who said that the nation would only crumble into the same pitfalls of the military

ESTRADA / A-8

WOMAN ON TOP
President Macapagal-Arroyo greets the audience during the awarding ceremonies in Gawad Kalinga's search for the most inspiring and resourceful communities held yesterday on the 3M Hall of Fame grounds in Pasay City.

Erap pardon could lead to fall of President

By Antonio Ouroutia

THE ABSOLUTE PRESIDENTIAL PARDON granted to former President Joseph Estrada por a banal closure to the most celebrated corruption case ever faced by a Filipino president after Ferdinand Marcos.

ANALYSIS

With the pardon, the saga of Estrada's fall from power—that started with his impeachment in Congress in October 2000—came full circle. It also created a new political storm that threatens to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo.

When the political history of the country in the first two decades of the 21st century is written, it will be defined by the intertwined fates of two presidents—that of Estrada and of Ms Arroyo.

Estrada's fate was sealed by corruption; Ms Arroyo's fingers are similar scars. But's presidencies are two sides of the same coin. Neither presidency can claim moral ascendancy over the other on the corruption issue.

While it was the Arroyo presidency that initiated the first plunder case against Estrada, she also cleared hundreds of the criminal stigma of corruption with the absolute pardon.

The executive clemency allowed Estrada to escape the ignominious fate suffered by Marcos.

Marcos died in February 1986 before a successor government could organize corruption charges against him, and before an angry mob that stormed

ERAP PARDON / A-17

HAWAII WARNING CENTER

Scientists scan world for tsunamis

By Tarra Quismundo

HAWAII BEACH, HAWAII—IT HAD BEEN quiet for days in this part of Hawaii. Generators at the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) were on routine watch at seismograph and tide readings from around the globe on a typical sunny morning.

In a snap, the drone-like whir of computers and the muted clink of keyboards were overtaken by the staff's beeper alerts that frantically sounded off every minute. Telephones rang right after they were hung up, and computer screens were updated almost every second.

A massive earthquake had just struck off Indonesia's Sumatra island, and the scientists were racing against time to warn coastal areas of a tsunami if deemed necessary.

Seconds had never been as precious. It was the lesson the world took from the Indian Ocean tsunami of Dec. 26, 2004, when close to 300,000 people were killed in vast swaths.

"This is unusually large — this happens around every 20 days ... Last week was very quiet. We had very few events to respond to," geophysicist Gerard Fryer said reporters from Southeast Asia who happened to be at the center at the time of the quake.

"There might be aftershocks from this event. In the next events will be easy to

SCIENTISTS / A-14

Unrequited love inspires cadet to win

By Vivena Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

FORT DEL PILAR, BAGUIO CITY—IT was a love story with an inconvenient truth.

Cadet Second Class Emmanuel Mission poured his heart out about voter-

UNREQUITED / A-10

Rebel soldiers offered jobs as VIP bodyguards

By Nikko Dizon

AFTER YEARS OF FIGHTING COMRADES-turned-insurgents and Abu Sayyaf bandits, what do Army Scout Rangers implicated in a failed power grab get from the military aside from court-martial?

REBEL SOLDIERS / A-9

'Rido' worsens conflict in South, says study

CLAN VIOLENCE HAS ASSUMED the conflict between government forces and Islamic separatists in the southern Philippines, making the decade-long search for peace there more barbed, a new study says.

The study, released on Wednesday by the Asia Foundation, said the peace process in Mindanao, where Islamic separatists have been fighting for self-determination since the 1970s, would have a better chance of succeeding if disputes between rival clans were addressed.

The project's researchers, who included Islamic scholars and anthropologists, found that in Mindanao from the 1970s to 2000, there had been 1,268 cases of clan violence—called "rido" by Filipinos. Muslims—in which 3,380 people were killed and thousands were displaced.

While clan conflict is common in many countries, rido is an especially volatile force because it has, according to the study, "wider implications for conflict in Mindanao, primarily because it tends to interact in unfortunate ways with separatist conflict and other forms of armed violence."

The government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front have been negotiating for peace since 1997, but no substantial agreement has been reached.

According to the study, half of

RIDO WORSENS / A-10

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

SWEEPSTAKES 6/42: 5 3 9 1 4 9

SUPERLOTTO 6/49: 4 18 38 39 40 43

P51,617,667.60

Nograles belies Palace loyalty check

'Malacañang meet was to show support for Estrada pardon'

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **MENDOZA** decries Senate treatment /A4
- **ARMY OFFICER** who died in Sudan to be honored /A6
- **AREAS AT RISK** of bird-flu infection listed /A9

By Norman Bordadora

AN ADMINISTRATION congressman said over the weekend that there was no need for President Macapagal-Arroyo to conduct a loyalty check among lawmakers in the wake of the alleged rift between her and Speaker Jose de Venecia.

Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles issued the statement late Saturday after confirming that a group of House members without De Venecia were in Malacañang on Thursday to express their support for Ms. Arroyo after the pardoned convicted plunderer, former President Joseph Estrada, earlier that day.

"There was no such thing as a loyalty check. The President knows in her heart who are the congressmen who won't desert her," Nograles told the Inquirer.

About 30 House members reportedly trooped to Malacañang on Thursday evening, further in the day De Venecia's son and namesake, Jose "Joey" De Venecia III, had also testified against Ms. Arroyo at the Senate.

The younger De Venecia said former Socioeconomic Secretary Romulo Neri had told him that the President wanted the 4,626-mile National Broadband Network (NBN) deal with Ontario ZTE Corp. approved even after he told her about a P200-million bribe offer made to him to approve it.

De Venecia also claimed that Mr. Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, was promised a 15% million commission from the NBN deal by those pushing for the project, an accusation that the latter denied as a "fairy tale."

"[The meeting in Malacañang was] only upon the insistence of the congressmen who were in Manila and mostly from corners through text messages only," Nograles said.

But Nograles, whose name was first mapped up as a potential replacement for De Venecia should his ally with Ms. Arroyo come to a head, said there was nothing about the meeting in Malacañang "to indicate" that.

"I myself sent text messages to congressmen including the Speaker. There was nothing to hide because there was no agenda about the House leadership issue. Like I said, we won't rock the boat," Nograles said.

He earlier said that the only way De Venecia would be replaced was if De Venecia himself allowed it.

Nograles, a member of De Venecia's Lakas party, reiterated that Thursday's meeting in Malacañang was "just to show support for (Ms. Arroyo's decision to pardon Estrada). It was a pure show of support and a social dinner and drinks."

Reform youth council, don't abolish it, says ex-SK leader

By Cristina Arnaldo, Inquirer Northern Luzon, and Dallit T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

LAOAG CITY—WHILE THE beleaguering Sabwan elections leader may appreciate the interest, this should not be a cause to sideline the youth from taking part in governance, the former national SK chief said.

"What we need is reformation [of the SK], not [its] abolition. The youth should be treated as partners, not merely beneficiaries, in implementing government programs," said Richard Alex Naluz, chair of the National Youth Commission (NYC) and president of the SK Alumni Association.

Naluz made the SK a sub-sector for the youth to mobilize their sentiments and, in the process, address issues to take action.

Republic Act No. 8044, or the Youth in Nation-Building Act, created the NYC in 1995 and established a national youth legislative and coordinated programs on youth development.

Under the law, all youth programs and projects that government agencies implement are evaluated and monitored for their role in involving and enabling the youth as partners in nation-building.

Naluz, who is also chair of the committee on Asian youth cooperation, is a former SK president of Ilocos Norte. He headed the SK national federation for some years.

Based on NYC's discussions among youth groups, the sector wants to play an active role in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of government programs, he said.

Meddling politicians

"They don't want to be relegated to being issue seizers or passive recipients [of programs]. They want to participate. The government should welcome this," he said.

"The SK was envisioned as a training ground for responsible leaders to hone their leadership skills. If they are exposed to corruption [in the process], a whole phase of the meddling of older politicians," Naluz said.

He said a provision in the SK reform bill seeks to shield the youth from any interference by traditional politicians.

The bill also seeks to lay down the distribution of SK funds to specific programs with 50 percent to be used for direct projects of a youth official while the rest would go to health, livelihood and anti-illegal drugs campaigns and capacity-building programs.

"We are also re-centering the minds of local government [officials] and the community that the SK should not only be for sports tournaments," he said.

All nat'l roads clear for holiday — DPWH

By Margaux C. Ortiz

ALL NATIONAL ROADS HAVE been cleared of obstructions in time for this year's observance of All Saints' Day, the Department of Public Works and Highways has announced.

Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. had instructed all DPWH regional directors and district engineers to conduct road maintenance work on national roads in preparation for the expected exodus of motorists going home to their respective provinces.

"The DPWH Address Action program includes road maintenance work such as pothole repair, slope protection operations, roadside vegetation control and drainage dredging operations," Ebdane said.

Teams composed of DPWH personnel and machineries will also be deployed to respond to road emergency situations. These teams will be supported by DPWH equipment and service vehicles which could double as tow trucks, he said.

But the Cordillera, the Gonzaga section of the Mt. Province-Kalinga Road and the Sabtan Bridge Section on the Cagayan-Pinukpuk-Abbot Road were temporarily closed due to landslides caused by heavy rains, DPWH Regional Director Mariano Mejaza reported.

"Our heavy equipment and maintenance crew are now conducting clearing operations on the affected roads and we are expecting to make them passable by this week," Mejaza said.

He also advised motorists to take Nagsilian Road and the Marcos Highway to go to Baguio City because Kennon Road is still closed due to debris and the bad weather conditions.

In Central Luzon, DPWH Region III Director Alfredo Tolentino reported that the Barangay Villa Aurora section of the Wawa-Bgy. Aurora Road was temporarily closed because of flooding.

Tolentino, however, pointed out that their maintenance operations on the Manila-Subic-Bataan Road have completed.

DPWH Region IV-A Director Bernardo Lopez, on the other hand, reported that the entire stretch of the Manila-South Road (Quirino Highway) and Antipas Highway (Quezon side) had been cleared of all debris to allow the free flow of motorists in all types of vehicles.

As this developed, the Philippine Coast Guard has tightened security at all ports and ferry terminals nationwide in line with the deployment of Undersecretaries and Commissioners's Option Holidays.

Dolphins to be bred in Davao S.

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A breeding station for dolphins will soon rise on Babe Island in Davao del Sur.

Air Inwater from Iran, Fuad Akbaran, has put in an initial P2 million to jumpstart the project, which is being undertaken with the local government of Santa Ana town in Davao del Sur.

Sur mayor Mayor Jerry Cuesa told the Inquirer that the dolphin breeding station was the first of its kind in Mindanao.

Cuesa said he and Akbaran signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) for the project, which will be established in a 15-hectare facility in Mia-Bukid.

"We told us he would be putting in some P50 million when the dolphin breeding starts," Cuesa said.

He said the project would not only help increase the dolphin population in the area, but it could become a tourist attraction.

Once the breeding station would need workers, Cuesa said locals could find gainful employment.

He said Akbaran, a dolphin enthusiast, had stated that the dolphins on Babe Island belonged to one family and were people-friendly.

"Imagine watching a group of dolphins swimming with its mom and leaping through the waves. That would surely merit the attention of tourists, especially nature lovers," Cuesa said.

He said Akbaran was now trying to get breeder dolphins so that could start the project immediately. Agustin Zenaida, Inquirer Mindanao

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Senators treated us badly, says Mendoza

By Ellen C. Cabacungan Jr.

FOR THE BATTLE-SCARRED RETIRED police general, appearing at a Senate inquiry into the controversial National Broadband Network (NBN) deal was a "harrowing experience" he is reluctant to go through again.

"My project (Senate investment) but it should be mutual. You are a Cabinet secretary, not just somebody picked up from the street," said Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza in an interview with business editors and reporters last week.

"They (senators) only want you to answer yes or no, they don't want you to explain yourself," Mendoza said.

Sad, sorry

Mendoza was relating his appearance at the Senate on Sept. 20 where he was asked to explain the government's decision to cancel the NBN contract in ZTE Corp. of China without a bidding.

"This is a different Senate. Sometimes you feel sad but I just tried hard to smile every time my staff looked my way. They have to respect us, we feel bad about the whole thing. That is our sacrifice. Our purpose in going there was to clarify all issues on procedure and (procurement)," Mendoza said.

Mendoza said he felt sorry for Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos and Commission on Higher Education Chair Romulo Neri who were treated roughly by the senators when they appeared before the latter on Sept. 26.

Equal treatment

Aside from being showered for his alleged wheeling and dealing in the NBN project, Abalos was also asked about an alleged extramarital affair. Neri, on the other hand, was besieged with repetitive questions by the senators who were dissatisfied with his answers, specifically on whether the President had ordered him to approve the NBN project despite the alleged bribe offer made to him by Abalos.

Mendoza said the senators should treat Cabinet officials as their "co-equals," being the "alter ego of the President."

When asked if he would attend the new Senate hearing, Mendoza said it would depend on the President.

Despite the avalanche of criticism that inevitably forced the President to cancel the ZTE contract, Mendoza said he continued to stand by his department's decision to endorse it.

"The project is good up to this day, I believe (that it is)," he said.

Mendoza said he was not surprised that local telecommunications firms were now keen on taking over the project after the ZTE contract was cancelled.

BI tightens up at Naia

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION SINCE June has blocked the departure of some 200 Filipino "tourists" for abroad on suspicion they would seek work overseas, under its intensified campaign to clamp out the notorious resort service racket at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan said yesterday that of the 318 passengers who were off-loaded from their flights from June 11 to Sept. 30, 202 were Filipinos while the rest were foreigners.

Libanan said 200 of the Filipinos were deemed to be undocumented workers disguised as tourists.

Human trafficking victims

"Many of them did not have the required documents from the POEA (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration) and so, tempted to leave in violation of the government's ban on the departure of undocumented overseas Filipino workers," he said.

He said most of the Filipinos were bound for destinations like the Middle East, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Of the 2/6 off-loaded foreigners, Libanan said most of them were transit passengers who were being maltreated by Iranian airlines employees. They were caught with spurious travel documents trying to board to various other foreign destinations.

Sad plight

Libanan said about 30 other Filipinos were also prevented from leaving for various reasons, including 18 persons who were on the bureau's hold-departure list and 10 government employees who did not have the required travel authority.

The immigration chief said the secret cashes, allegedly run by unscrupulous personnel of various government agencies with offices at the Naia, had been blamed for the sad plight of many undocumented Filipinos wishing to work abroad.

For a fee, these government personnel would undocumented would-be overseas workers through the maze of exit procedures at the Naia all the way to their aircraft, knowing full well they don't have passes and would likely end up at the mercy of employers abroad if they do make it out of the Philippines.

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Correction

IN THE OCT. 15 issue, a story on Page A2, "Cops, again, say they'll go after cars with stereo" — inserted the expiration date of the car insurance policy mentioned by Tier Gerone Chiok of St. John. The plates are valid until Oct. 31, 2006 — not April 16, 2006.

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Honors for Army officer

By Nikko Dizon

PHILIPPINE ARMY LT. COL. SERGIO Batalla, the United Nations peacekeeper who died of malaria last week in Sudan, will be given military honors today at Villamor Air Base in Pasay City.

His remains, scheduled to arrive last night at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport via Dubai, were to be brought to the Philippine Air Force headquarters chapel.

After the military honors, set for today at 7:30 a.m., Batalla's remains will be brought to the Libingan ng mga Bayani for a wake and the interment on Nov. 5.

Batalla was a member of the 13-man Philippine humanitarian delegation in the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) tasked to oversee implementation of the 2005 comprehensive agreement between the Sudanese government and rebel groups.

He was scheduled to end his year-long tour of duty in December when he succumbed to the disease on Oct. 24, a day after his 41st birthday, Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres said.

Batalla, a member of Philippine Military Academy of Class 1990, is survived by his wife and four children. The youngest is an eight-month-old boy.

"It is always with a heavy heart (that we experience) the loss of a very promising officer while in the prime of his career," Army chief Lt. Col. Alexander Yano said. "He might have gone earlier than most of his peers but his expiration for serving his country with honor, for being a good provider for his family and for sharing true friendship will be remembered forever."

Torres described Batalla as a "versatile" military officer who served in the intelligence, operations and personnel units of the Army.

Prior to his UN assignment, he was part of the Army Personnel Management Center.

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS PRO-MOTHER AND CHILD HEALTH RULING

Salamat sa Suporta

GATAS NG INA pa rin ang binigyang halaga para sa kalusugan ng mga sanggol at ina

A MAJOR VICTORY FOR BREASTFEEDING

The Department of Health salutes the international and local breastfeeding advocates for their efforts in winning the battle over the bottle!

The Supreme Court decided to uphold the right of the State to protect the health of its citizens through the stringent regulation on the promotion and advertising of infant formula and milk substitute products.

Now more than ever, we will be vigilant in the enforcement of 53 of the 56 provisions of the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Milk Code in support of breastfeeding.

- THE SCOPE OF COVERAGE OF PRODUCTS UNDER THE MILK CODE INCLUDES NOT ONLY INFANT FORMULA BUT ALSO BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES FOR OLDER CHILDREN.
- ALL ADVERTISING AND MARKETING MATERIALS OF MILK COMPANIES WILL BE SCREENED AND APPROVED BY AN INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE (IAC) BEFORE THEY ARE MADE PUBLIC.
- NO MILK COMPANY SHOULD SPONSOR HEALTH ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING CAMPAIGNS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND CLASSES INTENDED FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN.
- NO HEALTH WORKER SHOULD PROMOTE OR SELL INFANT FORMULA AND OTHER MILK PRODUCTS AND DEVICES.
- NO MATERIAL THAT PROMOTES BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES SHOULD BE VISIBLE IN ALL HEALTH FACILITIES.
- DONATIONS MAY BE MADE BY MILK COMPANIES ONLY UPON REQUEST AND WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.
- NO INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE SHALL SIT IN POLICY MAKING BODIES.

There is absolutely NO substitute for Breastmilk!

CA orders Esperon et al. to explain officer's detention

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE COURT OF APPEALS (CA) directed Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. and three other military officers to bring detained Marine brigade Commander Col. Ariel Querubin before it on Nov. 8 and explain why the officer is still locked up.

The appellate court's 16th Division issued a writ of habeas corpus in favor of Querubin after his wife, Ma. Pilar Querubin, questioned the legality of her husband's detention. She pointed out that after all the time, Querubin, suspected of complicity in an alleged coup attempt last year, had not been formally charged.

Aside from Esperon, the other respondents were Maj. Gen. Delfin Bangit, commanding general of the 2nd Infantry Division of the Philippine Army; Col. Arnulfo Marcos, commanding officer of the AFP Custodial and Detention Center in Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, and Col. Jovens Espino, camp commander, General Headquarters, at Camp Aguinaldo.

"Respondents are all ordered to appear before this Court on the said date and time to show cause why the said Col. Ariel G. Querubin is not entitled to his liberty," the CA said in its Oct. 25 resolution.

Querubin, a liberal of Valor recipient, is among 29 officers detained at Camp Capinpin. In February last year, he led a Marine-manned tank in front of the residence of Defense Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. to prevent the arrest of Gen. Danilo Lim, then chief of the Philippine Marine Corps, who was implicated in the alleged coup plot.

Querubin, a vocal critic of President Arroyo, was relieved of his command and charged with violation of Articles 96 (conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman) and 97 (conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline) of the Articles of War.

He was also charged with violation of Republic Act 7055 (Philippine Civilian Authority over the Military Act) and Republic Act 9372 (Human Security Act).

Querubin's lawyers, Rodrigo Arma, and Esperon had not signed the pre-trial agreement on the charges to be filed against Querubin, which was supposed to be the basis for the court-martial proceeding against him.

"Without a valid referral, therefore, a no charge before the court-martial," Arma said in a phone interview.

He said that because the court-martial was baseless, there was no reason to detain Querubin.

Querubin's lawyers also questioned the court-martial before the Supreme Court, asking the tribunal to stop the proceedings and to declare the creation of special general court-martial 2 against him and several officers illegal.

51M expected to vote today

To new page A2

the Commission there of the Philippines said its legal front representative had fielded sympathetic candidates to come to us.

In one region, the guerrillas were cowardly beating 28 candidates, including 22 who were running for barangay captains. The Associated Press reported.

Less violent than 2002

The PNP said 26 people had been killed and 13 others injured in election-related incidents in its monitoring monitoring of the peace and order situation prior to today's balloting.

"So far, the figures are much lower than the incidents recorded in the 2002 barangay elections," Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, PNP spokesperson, told the Inquirer.

Pagdilao said 139 incidents were reported for the entire election period in 2002. As of Saturday, only 25 cases were recorded, he said.

The 26 fatalities included incumbent barangay officials, candidates and civilians.

PNP information officer Ray Sinobo said 918 people had been apprehended for violating the gun ban, while 459 firearms had been confiscated.

The Comelec reported no major incidents in its preparations for today's voting.

Liquor ban

Its spokesperson, James Jimenez, said the poll body was mostly dealing with reports of people...perhaps too happy over the long weekend they were enjoying...leaving vote declaration mixes.

The liquor ban took effect yesterday and would last until midnight tonight.

Violators of the ban could face jail time of not less than one year but not more than six years, according to police.

Comelec Muntinlupa acting is running late vote in his hometown of Lahoz, Pampanga, before flying to Dumaguete City to attend the opening of the inaugurated Tanauan System basketball tournament.

Tanauan team's acting in the province today, many will likely have on their minds which candidates could solve the garbage problem facing their communities, from petty neighborhood squabbles to heated accusations and the lack of health services.

Many candidates are running for the house, power and privilege attached to the position.

What makes them run

The monthly allowance of a barangay captain may range from a low of P6,500 to a high of P30,000, depending on the internal revenue allotment (IRA) and income of the village.

Seven more, each barangay council members receives a monthly honorarium of P4,500, while the barangay chief gets P15,000 monthly.

A recent official said most candidates were running because of the honorariums they could get as well as for the scholarships granted to their children.

An SK chair, who also serves as member of the barangay council, gets at least P1,500 monthly.

For Pamuera, who considers most of the elective barangay officials to the positions, P3,000 is already a "honorar" because then such only when they harvest their crops, sells chili and.

Family affair

In Bulacan, Mayor Gilmore Sarmiento, 21, said the P1,078 monthly honorarium she received as Hagonoy SK chair in Bulacan town helped pay for her education.

She said scholarship assistance is also given to family members of village officials.

In Camotes, an entire family is running for barangay posts in separate villages.

Mark Tin Cendaña is running for the SK chairmanship in Maramburog while his mother, Mary Chang, is running for a seat in the barangay council.

Isah, the father, a former legal, is running for a council seat in Hagos several kilometers away in the politician, where the family resides, according to the young Cendaña's dad, Michelle Trinidad.

Several chiefs-in barangay Bulacan have fielded their relatives or close relatives to run for the posts they will soon vacate, role while they themselves are campaigning for re-election.

What's in a name?

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A former actor, Estacio said he was not capitalizing on the name of the former President but merely showing how he admired him. "My parents also love him very much. It's the reason they named me after him," he said.

One bet, three posts

In Los Baños, Laguna, a re-electionist candidate for barangay Kabulo is named Boy Cayton.

Another candidate running for barangay captain is one of the villages of Magsaysay is named Pacong Lungsod.

In Mayon Dodoloid, Comelec computers discovered that a 88-year-old brother was running for three positions in different barangays.

The Comelec removed the name of Brother as a barangay council candidate in Bacolod and Pulupandan after the three to run as barangay captain for Tabas Proper.

Sure of victory

In Catalina City candidates for village chair and village council in Rosary 13 have started serving the public even if they have not been elected.

Led by bodies contact Jose Ilustrisimo, the candidates were seen cleaning drainage and cutting grasses every morning while doing house-to-house campaign in the early morning.

"That is one way of showing we can be good servants. Ilustrisimo is close our campaign because due to one place and all of us will benefit from this campaign service," Raoul said.

Vote-buying, herding

Vote-buying and "herding" of young voters to ensure victory were reported in some areas in Bicol and the Visayas.

In Tacloban City, some candidates for barangay chair were reportedly buying votes for up to P500 per vote, prompting Mayor Alfred Romualdez to issue an appeal to both candidates and voters to keep the elections clean.

In Catanduanes, some 56 chair candidates have distributed P400 as initial payment for votes, with the balance to be paid on the eve or on the day of election, according to a local government official.

The competition to win seats in the barangay council has emboldened a candidate for SK chair to convince 25 of the 34 young voters in his area for an SK to town to go with him to the capital town of Virac, 58 km away, where they are now being "kept" in a safe house until Election Day.

This practice of "keeping," which is opposite to vote-buying where the voter is bribed not to vote, has persisted in Catanduanes ever since politicians forced councilors and SK municipal federation chairs, who will vote for their posts, and Thelma Agustilo-Fabian, to join them on trips outside the province.

They went so far as Boracay and Baguio City, where they were entertained until their return to Bicol province to vote.

In Pantay, Olongapo municipal, a human town official and some politicians were paying voters who agreed to have their names removed from the voters' list.

One of the issues of security concern being closely watched by the PNP is vote-buying.

In Pigcawayan, North Cotabato, a police sergeant was signed on Friday between warring members of the Ampatuan clan, who recently figured in a shooting.

In the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, police and government soldiers have been sent to villages of Lanao del Sur, Shariff Kabunsuan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao and Basilan, where at least 1,071 soldiers have been identified as "hotspots."

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ALL IN: elder Jangki Serrano of Porac, Pampanga, wants his people's (Dayao family) vote unanimous, and those who have patterns among politicians in the barangay.

In modern way of voting, Aeta rely on 'assistors'

By Tarrence Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

MABALACAT, PAMPANGA... The Aeta have long stopped selecting their leaders by pointing stones, corn kernels or bamboo sticks before them toward candidates.

Today voters they go to the polls, the non-voters and non-voters among them will be relying—as they had in past elections—on another set of perfect their ballots.

The term Aeta-say is usually nothing more than to know on so-called "assistor," or aids who can read, write and count, according to four Aeta candidates for barangay captain and have already.

Assistors have not been lacking of late, and believe to one who is running for his third and last term as chair of the upland village of Cabalangan here.

The assistor-in of an elementary school in the village in 1997, says years after Mount Pinatubo eruptions, has helped.

Many members of the tribe are now able to read and write," Sison, 51, said.

Pact to prevent cheating

They are expected to assist the voters among their parents and other relatives, by the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

To prevent rigging of elections, Sison and his four opponents, Antipo Pimentel, have made a pact whereby nonvoters would each help only three voters.

"An assistor should not tell his or his choices. What should be written are the names of the candidates that the voter chooses," Sison said.

Sison, who finished only Grade 2, said his being literate would help him from being "fooled."

"I learned to write and read and even speak English when I worked as a jungle survival instructor by the 13th Air Strike in the mountains of Mt. Pinatubo," he said.

Importance of trust

Atling Sangpid, district of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples in Central Luzon, said the selection system has been allowed by the Commission on Elections.

Sison and Ramon Eng, a candidate for barangay chair in Sindalan, Mabalacat, stressed that child—a value many Aeta hold dear—had helped prevent cheating.

Assistors are usually relatives of voters, they said.

"You can't violate the trust of your relatives," said Eng, who is running opposed his sister, Mary Isabelo, the incumbent village chief.

What's at stake in barangay polls

To new page A2

- Free medical care in any government hospital or outlet/s (including surgical expenses, X-rays, laboratory fees, etc.)
- Medical coverage of up to P5,000 as private institutions (chargeable to barangay funds).
- Exemption from payment of business and communication fees in their college or universities located in the province or city to which the barangay belongs. This benefit is extended to the official's legitimate dependent children and to SK officials.
- Preference in appointments to positions in government and in government-owned and -controlled corporations, subject to qualifications.

The existing barangay is also allowed to carry a firearm with in his/her jurisdiction in performance of peace and order functions.

Officials of more affluent barangays, like Ayala Alabang in Muntinlupa City, said SK legislation in Quezon City, receive about gets P15,000 monthly.

A recent official said most candidates were running because of the honorariums they could get as well as for the scholarships granted to their children.

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The election code states that barangay elections should be postponed in events "the person who files a certificate of candidacy shall represent or when such fill for more than one office, including membership in any political party or any other organization."

Despite this, some politicians are known to give financial support to aspiring barangay officials, hoping that some elections time, the latter would help them secure their shares.

Young guns

Young Filipinos have also been involved in local politics through the Sangguniang Kabataan.

Every barangay has a barangay Kabataan composed of eight elected officials—one chair and seven members—who are tasked to "promulgate resolutions necessary for the proper implementation of the youth in the barangay."

The Local Government Code states that SK candidates should be at least 15 but not more than 21 years old at the time of election. In 2002, RA 9164 amended the age qualification, saying candidates should be at least 15 years old and less than 18 years of age.

Registered constituents belonging to the same age range elect SK officials to three-year terms. Terms have been extended to four to the postponement of SK elections.

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DA lists areas where bird flu may enter RP

By Aryn S. Baroy

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY Arthur C. Yap has appealed to local government units and the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) to keep a tight watch on suspicious bird deaths during the months of October to December.

To keep the Philippines one of the only three countries in South-east Asia still free of the dreaded avian influenza, Yap also urged some 19,512 fishing communities, which employ over 130,000 Filipinos.

Bird flu, or avian influenza, is an infectious disease caused by the H5N1 virus.

All birds are believed to be susceptible to the virus, although some species are reported to be more prominent as infection transmitters. Some forms of bird flu may be transferred to humans.

According to Yap, the Department of Agriculture (DA) has intensified its information campaign in 20 towns in six of the 16 provinces as well as around the country's coastline and areas with high concentration of ducks.

The migratory birds are expected from Indonesia, Taiwan and China.

The critical areas are Lake Mainit in Agusan del Norte; Agusan del Sur; Ajanit, Gajarito; Olango Island, Cebu.

Lapuyan Marsh, Tubaran, Coastline of Central Zamboanga City.

Pagadian, Buug Marsh; Mapot Dam, Isabela; Naujan Lake; Mindoro; Hinunangan, Hinigaran municipal; Quezon, Palawan.

Candelaria swamp; Pamplanga, Bataan and Cagsa—to Bataan Island; Sibuguy province; Isabela del Norte; Balao and Malanog, Zamboanga; Sarangani del Sur; Zamboanga City; Zamboanga del Norte; and Zamboanga del Sur.

Duck farmers have been advised not to let their flocks near the critical areas to avoid contact with migratory birds.

The DA has also set up task forces in the municipal level to deal with any outbreak.

"If anyone spots a sickly-looking bird in their area, they should immediately report it to the nearest BAI office," Yap said.

Avian influenza diagnostic laboratories were set up early this year to pinpoint outbreaks and carry out the appropriate measures.

The BAI is also conducting table-top exercises as well as preparedness and response planning workshops.

A BAI team of veterinarians is carrying out a nationwide information campaign for poultry and livestock growers on the threat and perils of bird flu.

In the event of a suspected outbreak, local task forces have organized rapid action teams that could be deployed within 24 hours.

As of July 11, the World Health Organization reported that 291 of 318 people infected with the A1 virus have died since it reemerged in Southeast Asia in 2003.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, October 29, 2007
30th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Rom 8: 12-17
Gospel: Luke 13: 10-17

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Unrequited love inspires cadet to win

From page A1

quoted love, crooning for himself the top prize for impromptu speech at the 9th Philippine National Debate Championship, which the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) hosted here.

Music de Manila University won the wordsmithing tournament that ended on Saturday, beating 17 other colleges and universities, including the University of the Philippines and Ateneo de Manila college, according to Brig. Gen. Leopoldo Medgalog, PMA superintendent.

But it was Abraham who drew the most attention as the tournament wound up on Saturday.

Abraham was asked to describe his "most inconvenient truth."

Surprise topic

The question was inspired by the documentary on global warming which this year earned for former US Vice President Al Gore Oscars for best documentary and best song and the Nobel Peace Prize.

Abraham was given the topic only 30 minutes before he delivered his speech, which he titled "Love."

"Finally, he answered enough courage to ask the girl to the hop. His most inconvenient truth [is that] out to be the girl's cousin's feelings. She told him she had a boyfriend," Salceson said.

The final debate matches were scheduled to recognize day for PMA Lieut. Abel Gerlan Tipon, also an Ateneo Class of 2007.

Debate participants earned rhetorician beside the cadets' passion to watch the proceedings, her some of them spent the time preserving their speeches.

'Rido' worsens conflict in South, according to study

From page A1

the documented clan violence occurred between 2000 and 2004. During this period, the ceasefire between the government and the Islamic front was broken many times by clan fighting. — New York Times News Service

Body of US soldier recovered in Sulu

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE BODY of an American soldier who had been kidnapped from Basilan by gunmen allied with Al Qaida-linked militants in Sulu was recovered on Saturday, a day after he went swimming at a beach in Patikul in Sulu, reports said.

But Jesslee Sajid, Abu Sayyaf spokesperson, said the group had no information reaching his office was limited and he could provide no other details.

In Manila, US Embassy spokesperson Anthony Thompson said the American dead was Fatima, but declined to identify the serviceman and has said no provide details of his death pending notification of next of kin.

US military officials were investigating his death, Thompson said.

A Philippine police official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media, said the Americans went swimming while remaining with fellow soldiers in a lake in Patikul.

US Navy Lt. Commander Ted Bardini confirmed the death of the US serviceman.

But in a text message to the Inquirer, Bardini did not give specific details about the incident and said the victim died in a "noncombat related incident."

Bardini also declined to name the dead serviceman as a "matter of policy."

"The name will not be released until 24 hours after the next of kin have been notified," he said.

American military instructors, intelligence personnel and engineers have been providing combat training, weapons and intelligence help to the Philippine military in the country's restive South since 2002. They have also participated in road civic projects, including medical missions and road and school repairs.

There are basically the Philippine Constitution from engaging in local combat. There are number assistance has never Balikatan been combined with helping the autoproclaimed Philippine military inflict setbacks on the Abu Sayyaf, a radical group blamed for hundreds of kidnappings, beheadings and bomb attacks.

In February, US Marine Cpl. Timothy Lewis died of a head attack shortly after arriving on Jolo from his unit's base in Okinawa in southern Japan to take part in counterterrorism exercises.

The American soldiers also died in February 2002 when their UH60-47 Chinook helicopter crashed or ran aground on Jolo from his unit's base in Okinawa in southern Japan to take part in counterterrorism exercises.

US officials said it was unlikely Jesslee has not involved. — Reports from *Julie Alipala*, Inquirer Mindanao, and AP

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Environmental concerns drive beauties

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

PILI, CAMARINES Sur—Five beauty queens from four continents vying for the Miss Earth crown find higher cause in joining a pageant: to raise awareness of the environment, the degradation of which they are victims to in their own countries.

Zlatuica Hackbeil-Jurcic is from a city called Bratislavske di in Kazakhstan in Central Asia where the average life span is 50 years.

Describing the place as far and isolated, Kazakhstanis and their Russian conquered nuclear bombs once threatened in 1991 when the Soviet Union crumbled.

"I have seen many babies with abnormalities, with no hands and feet," she said.

Nuclear test

Nakhodjaeva, who earned a great the Kazakh language but Russian and English, joined the pageant to get the message out about what happened to her people and their environment.

"Nuclear testing must be stopped," she said.

Beyond the beauty pageant, Alin (pronounced Ee-in) Hotinky said she would continue her study on ozone pollution, the first part of which she has published.

Gormley has to degree in environmental science and is in her final year of doctoral studies on ozone depletion at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland.

She said where she's from fresh water sources are in grave risk of contamination because the algae is dwindling.

Desertification

In Africa, Miss Chad Oliye concerns herself with preservation campaign out of the course and prevention of desertification.

She said the upper is salt shores and before school kids to tell them about the industrious man cutting of trees and bad practices that hasten desertification.

"Our country is big with only 1.8 million inhabitants but 38 percent of it is the Kalahari Desert while 28 percent is classified reserve and only 12 percent built-up area and agricultural farms," she said.

Oliye lives in Jwaneng Town in Botswana where the processors prop. es garbage disposal because communities there have to be taught proper environment.

Norwegian Margaret Pedro Hauge loves a lawyer with, out snow in winter if the depletion of the ozone layer is not stopped.

Hauge, whose mother is from Inner City, said they missed the snow in Norway last winter because of the warm temperature, it raised hi- sound. r

"Our country has been known for its four seasons and winter is very important to us. People come to our place to enjoy the winter holiday," she said.

Myrnelyn Ochoa is from Ciudad (city) Camiss in Ecuador which, she said, is very clean and where one can drink the water, but the issue of "encroachments glob- of or global warming has moved her.

"Our city actually its simple doings like turning off lights and the refrigerator when not in use...Dispose of garbage properly and recycle," she said, adding that she shares this information with audiences in competition of the pageant produced by Carousel Productions Inc.

Priscilla O. Meirvenne, Carousel vice president and pageant director, said the pageant is a totally Filipino production but contestants from 85 countries, up from 43 when it started seven years ago. The finals is on Nov 11 at the LG Theatre, Ethiraj, Quezon City.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Political suicide

IN THE LAST THREE DAYS, THE INQUIRER HAS sought to put last week's pardon of convicted plunderer Joseph Estrada in perspective, to explain why—even though we, like many others, saw it coming—it still came as an enormous outrage, a terrible disservice to the country and a travesty of justice.

On Friday, we criticized his lawyers' appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo, asking them to not let the intolerant dishonesty and rank condescension of their letters to Estrada get in the way of the decency reasons the President gave for granting her gentle executive clemency, and found them sorely wanting, trivial even. And yesterday we picked up a theme raised earlier and condemned this obscene pairing of political heartlessness, to repeat a phrase making the rounds, it is the People of the Philippines vs Joseph Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

One more thing needs to be said, one more attempt at perspective-setting needs to be made. On the strictly factual level, well the President's reasons fall to ensure her enormously politicized survival work?

On the strictly technical level, the pardon doesn't exactly make sense. At best, it is an unnecessary risk-taking, with make-no-bread consequences, at worst, it doesn't the political rehabilitation, one of a disgraced former president, but an unpopular incumbent.

The motives (proposed last week by a remarks political analyst, and seconded by a few others) that Estrada could run again, and that his pardon was in exchange for prosecuting Mr Arroyo should be veto again, to run only an abroad fantasy; it is also a legal impossibility. The Constitution bars him from running for life including, the seat of government he once hosted on Jan. 20, 2001, ever again; if he flies, he will be disqualified by the Commission on Elections, whoever the new commissioners will be. If he is not disqualified, a suit before the Supreme Court will settle the matter with alacrity. On the point the Constitution is unambiguous; even politicians will understand it.

To be sure, this nation conflates with the chief reason the President gave for granting Estrada executive clemency, but the conflict is of no moment. Estrada can legally run for political office other than the presidency; the only thing holding him back would be that promise not to run again and, as he said an adoring crowd gathered in the City of San Juan, engage in "dirty politics." But Mr Arroyo herself infamously made a similar commitment, and so Rizal Day yet. What makes her think Estrada will honor his own promise?

The idea that the pardon will usher in a new era of reconciliation, and that Estrada's supporters will eventually warm to Mr Arroyo, underestimates the depth of the political divide. The same adoring crowd in San Juan and the third of the electorate that conventional wisdom thinks they represent may have applauded her for releasing Estrada, but it is a stretch to imagine that they will forget, not only the former actor's six years in jail, but the election fraud the allegedly perpetrated against another actor-politician and populist icon, the late Fernando Poe Jr.

Not least, the argument that the deep divinity of the Edsa II furore caused by the pardon could be easily contained, its effect on postwar campaigns at election-season safely managed, is fatally flawed. The real power of the middle forces lies, not in the ability to elect a president, but in its capacity to unseat one. Turbulent as the President's first six years in office have been, the Estrada pardon will only incite her last three years even more tumultuous. She now rides it out to the end of her term, but she will find that her act of executive clemency has limited rather than widened her options for choosing the terms of her exit.

Like many others in society interested in making the country's democratic project succeed, we have never ruled out the possibility of pardon per se. Like many others, we have always believed that support for any grant of clemency was conditional. It was a question of the timing being right, and correspondingly conditions (such as admission and repentance) being met. President Arroyo, however, granted Estrada pardon to many personal and political ends. That she won't meet them is ironic; that she politicized the administration of justice is, alas for all of us, tragic.

Editorial

Don't vote for the drunkards

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

VOTERS TOO GO TO THE POLLING PRECINCTS today to vote for your barangay officials, don't vote for the drunkards. Also "tambays," the pickpockets, the good-for-nothings just because they were the ones who had the most participation in your drinking sessions. Vote for the most responsible-looking and sensible-looking.

Candidates who attend drinking sessions night after night to campaign for votes would be the latest to do the same if they are elected. Yes, the voters will have to subsidize their drinking habits. What a person is pilloried as a mere "istambay," there's a new indication that he is either lazy or can't find or keep a job. He will not the Barangay Funds to support his family. Many drinkers good-for-nothings have found positions in the barangay so as to stay source of livelihood, for they don't look for jobs anymore. They are spend their days drinking and scouting votes for the next elections. They are the ones who sell votes to the candidates who can afford them.

Many barangay officials have started joining like congressmen—who is in the sense that any person can be congress. They have begun to pass on ordinances to take their constituents, many of whom are poor. They cannot pull their counterparts to the enlightened villages so they subsidize the poor in the squatter colonies who do not know any better—the very people who need the help, not the exploitation, of their barangays.

There are those who say voters that reject 10 percent of all incumbents is unwelcome in town fiestas the night drinkers are not invited to the parties for the help of the barangay to collect a long unpaid debt. Even if the debtor is willing to pay the creditor is the power to refuse his own money the barangay could still insist that he pay through a check that was undue 30 percent? Isn't that illegal? That is why many barangays don't go to barangay courts to settle differences but take the law into their own hands.

Other barangay officials abuse their constituents, the people they are supposed to help. Others collect coup from squatters, jaywalkers and bicycle drivers. Instead of enforcing the laws, they are the first to violate them. Do you remember that barangay captain in Manila who built his house in the middle of the street? It took a Jerry Henry, Mayor Alfredo Lim, to get him out of there.

What I am driving at in this: Vote wisely today. Just because a person is a lovable drinking buddy doesn't mean he would make a good barangay official.

• • •

Speaker Jose de Venecia has called for a "limited revolution" to "end corruption in our society." Look who's talking!

The most corrupt agency in the Philippines is the House of Representatives. Billions of pesos of the people's money are wasted here, most of it going from private pockets. The secret of salapaging here are the Bureau of Customs and Bureau of Internal Revenue but no, the House, whose members are routinely addressed as "your honor" and "honorable," is worse when it comes to corruption, beginning with the pork barrel. And that is because the speaker tolerates and abets it. The most prolific candidate in the Bishops Conference that keeps him on the Speaker rose after year? Is the worst anti-drunkenness in Malacañang, who were the recipients?

What we need is not only a "limited revolution" but a real revolution where many of our top officials will be hauled up against the wall.

• • •

It is said among businessmen and entrepreneurs that it is very hard to do business in the Philippines because of corruption. Even if you want to do business honestly the bureaucracy won't let you. It will give you the runaround and you may get tired and finally give up your whole plans. Such diseases in many offices are always open—so you can easily drop your pen left or here.

Ironically, it is the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), an agency associated with gambling, that is the exception to this rule. And in showing the way to transparency and fair play it is also showing the way in pursuing its ambitious project to establish a multi-billion-peso massive tourism and entertainment complex. To be known as "Integrated Resorts Philippine Manila Bay Integrated City," the development will rise on 40 hectares of prime reclaimed land between Roxas Boulevard and Manila Bay. There will be theme parks, amusement rides, hotels and restaurants, theaters, etc. Per Project Director only gambling. Also be of it is not considered an integrated resort.

Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes (environment, the project will document a diverse range of world-class tourist and amusement facilities while offering a suite of the typical chains of our country and the arena hospitality of our people.

If successful in the execution, the project is expected to bring in at least $20 billion in foreign and local investments, create more than 250,000 jobs for the local workforce and generate millions of direct tourist receipts and additional government revenues.

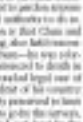
Realizing the value of transparency and legality in upholding the public projects of this magnitude, Pagcor has made public through its website the terms of reference (TOR) for the pre-bid and prequalification process.

Also, to clarify any questions on the TOR, Pagcor has held an interactive conference to would-be investors, who have now already submitting their applications for investors to participate in this development. The investors have been assured that they would be informed immediately whether or not their applications have been accepted and, in case of disapproval, the reasons behind the decision.

Pardonee and pardoner

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



MSGR. SIN IMPUDOSOR ESTRADA'S DEVOTE "The saddest moment in history as far as justice is concerned." This is a very bad precedent, considering that you're supposed to be teaching our politicians not to be corrupt and to remember good governance," says Dante ang, a SOPIL columnist.

Fidel Ramos says GMA made a mistake to pardon Erap because Erap was still capable of doing to her what she did to him. Erap's ability to screw you has not diminished, he says, nor is he completely discredited. He remains a threat to her in any case, he says. Erap himself has not admitted his crimes and public is apologized to the nation to deserve a pardon. The fine former Korean presidents—Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo—did to before they were pardoned by their successor. That is a prerequisite. "A lawyer cannot atone for the guilt of his client. Erap himself must do so."

Well, yes and no to both. As far as MSPE is concerned, nope, the Erap pardon just the sad, sad day in Philippine politics, a far more sad and bloody earlier, like the time Edris Enrile pardoned Imelda and increasingly solitary quest for justice while the man President feels free to tell the UN with a straight face she does not abide human rights violations in her country.

Indeed, your mother than Erap's mother is MSPE's most popular quiet to deny Erap—and only Erap—pardon. If Cecilia Muñoz Palma, during martial law, the name of one of the organizations that fought it was "Justice for Wacky, Justice for All," MSPE should have said nay to that, history being the thing they don't like to have defied backdrop. The better precedent would have been "Justice for Erap, Its Pardon for Everyone. The acronym might have sounded a little wrinkled, "NOPE-NOPE," but the concept would see. The point is simple. Justice is epidemical or not at all. You don't get justice at all, you don't get justice for Ninoy. You don't get justice for anyone who committed or ordered the crime or anyone upon whose crimes Ninoy Erap, you don't get justice simply by not pardoning Erap.

That brings us to the heart of the matter, which is that the issue of Erap's pardon isn't so black and white as our adverse sense things to be. The questions aren't just whether Erap deserves to be pardoned or not, the questions are also whether GMA has the right to pardon him or not.

Whether Erap deserves to be pardoned or not, we can debate to our hearts' content and want to no conclusion. I myself share the outrage of SOPIL, the sadness and the perspicacious judgments of Edris E, about the pardon and agree with them that this needs a strong signature the corrupt and unholy past, present and future.

That is to notwithstanding that I also know that public opinion favors a pardon. That was the case as far as the 1992 survey before the Hong Kong tourist convinced Erap—which is probably why Malacañang thought of this pardon even then, this is by no means "hasty," as critics charge—that showed the majority amenable to a pardon immediately or soon if Erap were found guilty. It's not only the majority of the poor either, even if it manifested so. It's hard to believe about the case of the poor, or even economic one there, when you see bombarded daily with the size of the payout. That's what happened too during Cory's time. The pillage of the Marcos era upset mostly the middle classes with the spectacle of the pillage of Kalayaan made her.

We can debate to our hearts' content whether Erap deserves to be pardoned or not, but we may not debate whether GMA has the right to pardon Erap or not. She does not. First, we may not vote directly—that is the right to vote that country needs to pardon anyone. She does not—not after "Hello, Garci." This is not one where the issue of proof of innocence or guilt is put more on the judge than the judged. The question isn't not: Should Erap be pardoned? The question is not: Should he be pardoned?

That is for neither of them to decide. That is for the people to. There will be a day of reckoning, and it like the survivors are also to be believed, that the wish some intended are so soon.

The prosecutor's lament

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE WHY LAST FRIDAY should be a sad day for the Special Prosecutor. Mr. Ver did, he pooled all his energy and gave up as many things to do while he did his best. He could do his mission as Special Prosecutor. He, in fact, had to go on leave from his teaching chores at the Ateneo Law School. Incidentally we are glad he is back. I thus understand that nothing the reversal of Judge Peralta's petition will change his status as tenured teaching and loss something that his office as prosecutor for the last plaintiffs.

Whether one likes it or not, we have inherited from the British system via American consultants and through the 1935 and 1973 Constitutions a presidential system which—contrary to what many that is not realized. It does not call it an interest, but only unintended. "The grant of a pardon," as Justice Malcolm once remarked, "may be only a preventive — involving consequences of a purely personal character." Its purpose is not to punish or to enforce," but the power of executive clemency as we have it now is the least favorable of the arsenal of executive powers.

As it pointed out last Monday our Constitution places only three specific limits on the pardoning power. First, only those convicted by final judgment can be exercised only after final conviction. Second, pardon can be granted for election offenses only upon the recommendation of the Commission on Elections. Third, pardon may not be granted in cases of impeachment, for the obvious further check has one.

What is there in impeachment cases that is impervious to pardon? We have to go back first of all to the nature of a pardon. "A pardon is an act of power, proceeding from the power entrusted with the execution of the laws, which exempts the individual, on whom it is bestowed, from the punishment the law inflicts for a crime he has committed." From this it is clear that there can be no pardon if no punishment has been imposed. Thus in the impeachment cases the Senate sitting as Court can have applicability only if the impeachment process had ended in the conviction of a possible limit, which it did not.

Joseph Estrada received no punishment from the impeachment that was started against him. The impeachment process was never conducted. In fact, even if it had been conducted, the only punishment he could have received would have been removal from office and disqualification from holding office in the government.

But Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo did not remove him by presidency. She could not have done so even if she wanted to. Neither did she lift a disqualification from office that would have been imposed by an impeachment court, due to, the senses. Rather, the disqualification she partially lifted was one imposed by the Sandiganbayan upon the plaintiff by the Special Prosecutor. That had nothing to do with his failed impeachment. To say that it resulted from impeachment would distort the nature of the Special Prosecutor's mission.

I also said earlier that there are only three specific limits to the power to pardon, is there perhaps an unspecified limitation?

We do have that provision in the Constitution which says that judicial power includes the power "to determine whether or not there has been grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction on the part of any branch or instrumentality of the government." We know and we have seen this applied to independent bodies like the Commission on Elections, the Commission on Appointments and the Ombudsman. Nobody is calling upon the Court to the President even if were so gingerly.

But President Arroyo assume such grave abuse of discretion? If we must go by the precedents of the Supreme Court, as indeed we must, we will see that it is not easy to sustain such accusation.

Ponder how the Supreme Court has defined such grave abuse. "By grave abuse of discretion is meant such capricious and whimsical exercise of judgment as is equivalent to lack of jurisdiction. The abuse of discretion must be patent and gross as to amount to an evasion of positive duty or a virtual refusal to perform a duty enjoined by law, or to act at all in contemplation of law, as where the power is exercised in an arbitrary and despotic manner by reason of passion or hostility."

Anyone challenging the validity of the pardon of Mr. Ver will have to convince the justices of Presidents Arroyo against this definition. It will not be easy to do so.

But would it not be enough to say that nothing Secretary Ignacio Bunye has been known to her recommendation (I know she is a hard worker!), and that the President was barred with, and that she should have consulted those with Sub Cabinet? Here we must go back to the Constitution and to the general powers of executive power to run opinion.

In the oft quoted words of Justice Jose P. Laurel, "In our presidential system the President is the head executive of the government of the Philippines, and no other. The heads of the executive departments occupy political positions and hold office in an advisory capacity, and, in the language of Thomas Jefferson 'should be of the President's bosom confidence,' and, in the language of Attorney General Cushing, 'are subject to the direction of the President.'"

Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. wrote a book about the American presidency and called it "The Imperial Presidency." Come to see for himself, the executive department is more, much more, in one form of imperial empire.

Keeping the people poor

COMMENTARY

Francisco F. Claver, S.J.
John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues

THERE WERE ACE, A MANILA BABY (NOT the Bayani substituted above outlooking I found more pending. The size of the paper was the standard newspaper size." Unsure I was supposed to be eyeballing to take away the World Heritage site from the Bayani and Bigas ties remain for the people's failure to stop their destruction and for similar violations of conditions imposed on them by the UNESCO.

When I read the editorial, I asked myself: How could Unesco take away an award it had never given? For the fact is the city version of Bayani and Bigas were never the sole recipients of the World Heritage award. The award was given to the entire Vigan area, and this includes the not only the Bigas version but those as well of the Mountain Province, Kalinga, Benguet and possibly the Tinguian areas of Abra.

On the other hand, I can see where Unesco could make the mistake. Vigan, and Bayani and Bigas simplify especially had been navigating, inquire a subjective manner, the world heritage site of distinction, and it seems Unesco, the very executive of the city, had fallen for their false impression that it could in fact be in charge and not consult those records?

Whether Bayani goes through with what it is reported to be thinking of doing, an understandable act is, the sad fact is that the city version of Bigas is a number of provinces in real danger of disappearing, altogether. Only some urban and rural erosion, loss of which are often the result of neglect. But the city version of the rest of the Cordilleras? They still are astoundingly worthy of the award.

Two years ago I was asked by the Bigas Save, the Unesco Movement to give a talk on their behalf. I did, but they didn't like what I said. "I'm sure in your class (at least)," I told them, "keep the people poor!" They knew well what I was talking about. Only the poor have the patience—and the need—to do the back-breaking work required to keep these terraces productive and viable.

As more and more native Ifugao (and other tribes for that matter) grow college and become degreed professionals, they become less and less the kind of people needed to keep the terraces healthy for the time. Even the Batad ecotourism outlook is now in danger of losing its charm because the government officials and tourism people I've met say they will be willing to deny their hotels working those fields themselves so do their lot to preserve them—although probably one of point for their preservation heritage, they should. And the poor the rice fields are left unattended and uncared, the easier prey they become to storm infestations and erosion. (The fact is are too well known, but the entrance of tourists are not faced with stone walls, like ones in the Cordilleras, and hence are always in danger of erosion.)

The President herself was made aware of the problem at least two or three years ago and her response, as reported in the papers, was something to the effect that she would see if she could get some subsidy from Thailand to address the people on what to do. I haven't heard if such moves have been brought to...fine I would think, with all due respect to the President, that they are not what is most needed.

The main problem in regard to the stability of these terraces, as I see it, is human: in the unresolved one between what I would call the "luxury makers" and the "luxury merchants": the luxury makers are the farmers who work on the terraces for the rice they grow, the luxury merchants the owners of hotels and restaurants, the gift shops and travel bureaus—luminous people who make their living from the tourism industry.

And the heart of the problem? It is the most threatening and unresolved one of the urgent challenges of our time: how to bring about a more humane tax system. Tourists come by the thousands every year from all over the world and continue to admire their beauty. No tourism is a big money earner. But except perhaps for those interested (or) more and workers who have their livelihood from the terraces, the luxury makers, the actual tillers of the soil, the luxury makers, don't get much, if anything at all, from the tourism industry that their ancestors made possible. And profitable. All the gain goes to the merchants. I don't see anything that is likely to push them off the terraces will not be found easily if the glaring imbalance—a clear lack of basic justice—is not remedied.

That part of the problem is what those interview-terraces should be concerned most about, not just how to get funding for the present incidence the terraces or how to get the President to act on her promises about them. That experts in things mind there seems to be more interest for the luxury merchants than for the luxury makers. The latter will have to wait for a long time, waiting to eat. Except perhaps one exceptionally kind of movement!

The price of power

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

AFTER EDSA XDE, I EXPRESSED THE OPINION, similar to present, that having stepped down, and having decided henceforth, Joseph Estrada should be left alone to live/dabble and bet to suit me in his riches. Greater under the circumstances, was enough. When Edsa Dos forces insisted he should be thrown to jail, again, I expressed reservations on the basis of the country's reputation for vindictiveness, and the principle that you do not kick a man when he is down. When the pressure to charge him and try him proved irresistible, I cautioned that pending the trial, he should still be allowed to stay in Greenhills, as humiliating him would not serve due to the end justice.

After having gone against her instincts and ordering the arrest of Estrada, President Macapagal-Arroyo always proved ambivalent about the end and a constraint on Team Day One started pursuing the case against Estrada. Throughout the life, she would be persistent in offering a pardon. Meanwhile, she expressed no dissatisfaction with the trial being dragged out, since a quiet resolution of the case wouldn't do her any good, and would only serve to remind people that the prosecutors, neither side seemed capable of figuring out what a possible compromise could be.

Said so, earlier this year I proposed that Estrada on the Gravidan basis and run for office. It offered up a possibility for the public to resolve something they'd rather not deal with, namely what to do. Estrada preferred to continue pursuing him to Team Day One house. After the election, when it became clear Estrada's endorsements was not as powerful as people had expected, and when the Senate race in late 2007 and the public would (reasonably speaking) was completely against her, the true Segan to move toward a resolution. By the day the verdict was handed down, both Estrada and Arroyo besides discovered they stood more to lose than to gain from the verdict

Pardon mocks values we teach

LETTERS

will, THE OPINIONS AND MEMbers of the College Faculty Association of Silliman College and researchers of Silliman University strongly denounce the granting of pardon to former President Joseph Estrada.

After our motion went through the sin tuudi of Erap II became official in "Erap III," after six long years that the Ombudsman spent in careful, courageous and thorough prosecution of witnesses and documents before the Sandiganbayan and after the rigorous defense by his brilliant legal team, he was found guilty of plunder beyond reasonable doubt.

Our criminal justice system has affirmed the judgment that our people rendered in People Power II. The matter is now supposed to be in a position to move on, with its belief in our justice system restored and with some of our national pride restored. We should now look forward to making other heritage officials accountable before our people and our justice system. But we cannot do all this with the grant of pardon to Estrada. Clearly, the government would not let us move on.

For political expediency, legislators and Malacañang offered pardon for the unrepentant and arrogant convict, one who shamelessly plundered and disgraced our beloved nation has been absolved of his crime by President Macapagal-Arroyo who herself is tarnished by so many scandals.

Miriam College stands for truth, justice, peace and integrity. Truth was taken sadly based with the transgression decision. Justice will not be served if Estrada escapes his sentence. And peace will be a long time coming because with this precedent, graft are will continue to rob our society, unabated of the full force of the law, and socio-economic disparities in our society will worsen.

Education is extremely difficult when the school teacher good citizenship while the country's leaders make a mockery of it. For the sake of our children and our future, pardon should not be given without finicals (last but lawyers) apologizing to the Filipino people and without justice being rendered first.

—RAUL G. LUMBERA, president,
Silliman College Faculty Association,
Carlene CES Officer,
Silliman College,
Leyola Heights,
Kadapawan Road, Quezon City

Straight-out insult

THIS IS IN REFERENCE TO THE news report "After denials, local officials own cash gifts," (Inquirer, 10/24/07). After 18 the cabinet, the League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP) finally admitted to handing out the money. This is a straight-out insult to the intelligence of Filipinos.

Why were they so reluctant to publish names handed out so naturally in paper bags ever? Shouldn't there be more internal controls in the disbursement of government funds? And if the money were given out under the auspices of the LPP, shouldn't the recipients have been made aware of the gifts beforehand?

The simplistic and logistic wrong-doer explanation of the LPP seems to be investigated vigorously through already.

—RALPH PENALOSA,
ralph.penal@inet.com

Nothing wrong with Miriam 'mission'

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING the public duties first. Mirlam Defensor Santiago's campaign for a seat in the International Court of Justice (ICJ). ("Miriam wants to campaign for int'l court seat while Gibo dissents," 10/18/07.)

It is both a long-standing tradition and standard Senate procedure to mark "Ex Officio Absent" any senator discharging government functions, such as delivering a speech or even crowning a fiesta queen. There is nothing wrong if the senator requests to be marked "On Official Mission," after all, the ICJ bid is not her personal project but a project of the Republic of the Philippines, through the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Candidates of other countries follow suit so let the rules campaign schedule in that of the ICJ, if the Philippines does not campaign in the same way, it will never have a serious chance of winning the ICJ seat. Election in the World Court is mostly a political process.

Senator Santiago's foreign relations committee has already approved the ratification of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership agreement according to the published schedule. Subsequent hearings were set upon the request of Sen. Edgardo Angara.

Senator Santiago still discharge her Senate functions in between her trips abroad. She must follow the campaign schedule set by the JBA, despite suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome. Thus, she will have a very grueling year.

—JESSICA LIPP
EL PANDY ENGLAND,
deputy chief of staff,
Office of Senator Santiago,
Defensor Santiago,
mdsantiagoteam@yahoo.com

P1B fund not enough

THE P1 BILLION BUDGET ALLOTTED BY Rep. Edcel Lagman for family planning causes a great deal of concern for us, health care workers at the forefront in taking care of our very sick countrymen.

I am one of the few nurses who chose to work in the Philippines despite the past influential health facilities in our country and the lure of high-rank amenities abroad. Since my graduation from the University of the Philippines in 1993, I have worked in government hospitals in Manila and under-served barangays in Laguna.

Many of our people endure their ailments until they can hardly breathe because of the skyrocketing costs of medical care in hospitals, we have had children whose limbs were as thin as a twig and whose bellies, bloated by parasites, made them gasp for breath. The children had only a few days to live—like the adults with end-stage tuberculosis who came to the emergency room vomiting blood. The few coins left in their pockets were not enough to bring them to TB referral centers, while their families had their last meal a day before.

Back in the heartrending reality that we health workers confront every day in our country. And our plight is the same as our patients' since we don't have the needed supplies and facilities to care for our sick clients. Oftentimes, are recycle medical gadgets; we improvise devices to aid the breathing of our critically ill patients. Gloves are so scarce that many times we find ourselves handling bodily secretions with our bare hands. Masks are considered too costly even in government hospitals. So, it is no surprising that many of us beside workers contract TB and other communicable diseases ourselves. This further aggravates our long-standing problem of staff shortage where our nurse-to-patient ratio of 20, 30 or more per patient.

We need a higher budget for the health care personnel and facilities. The condoms and IUDs will not help us save the life of a patient bleeding internally because of dengue, or an infant crying without tears because of severe diarrhea. The majority of our illnesses are due to malnutrition and are preventable—diarrhea, parasitism, respiratory infections, etc. We need funds to disseminate health information to our remotest barangays. Aside from strengthening our primary health care services in the grass-roots level, we need to equip the secondary and tertiary health facilities of the government especially in the countryside.

To allocate P1 billion for population management alone does not make sense in this poverty-stricken, illness-plagued country. At the most, when we hear lucky countries actually promoting population growth.

We need a higher budget for health personnel and facilities to be able to properly take care of our sick countrymen. We need funds especially for our children who will suffer in their whole lifetime the consequences of hunger in their first years of life.

—LOURDES MARIE TUDEL,
assistant professor,
University of the Philippines-Manila

Manibis fed wrong info

I WRITE IN REACTION TO THE OCT. 10 LETter of Jesus Rizalita Jr. regarding the Binjidad digging at St. Lopez Boulevard corner Infanta Street, Baler, Tondo, Manila. I want to inform Mayrina that I did not send the picture to the Inquirer.

When I did want to was Mayor Cesario Gall, seeking help to harass the almost-one-month-old MWSS digging. I visited second week of September and I think the Inquirer took the photo of the unfinished excavation work first week of October. It was published Oct. 8, 2007. If the photo had been taken earlier, it would have shown a smaller excavation.

Mayrina stated in his letter that the digging was finished as early as Sept. 6, 2007 and that the "river became passable to vehicles on Sept. 13, 2007." I think he was given the wrong information by his subordinates.

For the whole month of September, we had to bear with major provoking traffic caused by an unfinished Manibid digging. The fear is the digging was permanently converted only late in the second week of October. I should know best; I live here.

I don't blame Manibis. I'm sure he was fed incorrect information by his men who wanted to earn "pogi points." I just want to let him know what really happened.

I want to thank the Inquirer for helping us get the attention of Manibid. Likewise, we are glad to know that Manibid has finally a way to improve water service in Baler, Tondo.

—ALICIA F. ESTRELLADO,
aestrellado@yahoo.com.ph

Estrada watched by opposition allies

By Cid C. Cabauatan Jr.

THE OPPOSITION IS MONITORING closely the watch and actions of former President Joseph Estrada after his wife urged that he has changed his colors and has jumped over to the side of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"His future actions and demeanor is confirming Jenny and countrywoman Senator Loi's Macapagal-Arroyo can judge his political persuasion. Accepting a position in government under Mrs. Arroyo will be an instant giveaway," said Sen. Panfilo Lacson in a text message to the Inquirer.

Sen. Ilocano "Nipsey" Aquino III said Estrada's acceptance of a government position from her nemesis would certainly "swallow" his opposition allies.

"He was one of the leaders of the opposition, it will be crushing if he will have to support all those things represented by President Arroyo. It will be a complete turnaround and it will be difficult for his loyalists to understand," said Aquino in an interview.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. doubted Estrada would accept a government position from the President because it would be "unlikely."

Beyond redemption

"Efforts to beyond redemption and anyone who allies with her would also self-destruct along with the administration," said Pimentel.

"I want to emphasize that we to the Senate opposition are not going to change nor on our di-

rection simply because of the pardon. We will continue to stand up to fight for the rights of the people," he said.

Except for thanking the President for his speech on the night of his return to Polk Street in a few days, Estrada has so far not shown any wavering from his stand as an opposition, said Aquino.

Gen. Jumbo Madrigal said the pardon only legitimized Mrs Arroyo's power grab in 2001. She said that Estrada's acceptance of any position in the Arroyo administration "would make a mockery of the six years he spent in jail and destroy what core principles he has left."

Politics of transaction

Lacson urged members of the opposition to continue their "Hamilang" rule and not be

threatened by what he called "politics of transaction."

"This has dominated the overall policy direction of this administration in all the years of its existence," he said.

"There's too much corruption and abuse as there is evident poverty and unequal justice and wealth everywhere that nobody, not even Erap, can get in the way of the opposition's role to help provide the check and balance as well as a better alternative in the reinforcement of the Arroyo regime," he said.

Aquino said he continued to endorse the pardon of Estrada not only because of old age but also because granting him executive clemency would pave the way for true dialogue and bring down the tension between the warring factions in the country.

Malacañang had a chance to heal him.

Estrada is now a free man, with political rights fully restored by executive clemency, not prompted by humanitarian considerations but more so by the cross demands of political expediency.

The pardon came at the wake of breaches of legal procedures governing equal treatment of citizens charged with criminal offenses.

Extraordinary leniency

Estrada enjoyed exceptional treatment that affronted citizens' conception of fair and equal administration of justice. The clemency has reinforced their cynicism that the powerful and influential are above the law.

No convicted criminal has been treated with more extraordinary leniency than Estrada. Special rules were made for him in the effort to help peace with his supporters.

When Estrada entered San Juan City Hall upon his release, he was unrepentant. He told some 3,000 supporters, "I may have committed mistakes in my career in public service, but I assure you that corruption is not one of them."

The President granted the pardon on three grounds: Estrada is 70 years old and qualifies for clemency under the policy of releasing inmates who have reached that age; he had been under detention for six and a half years; and he "has publicly committed to no longer seek elective office."

The real reason was spelled out in the President's speech at the Philippine business conference at Manila Hotel on Friday. He said the pardon was aimed at ending "the single significant source of political strife and controversy" in his nine-year presidency.

Force for righteousness

She sought to make the pardon "a powerful force for righteousness, compassion, healing, national stability and advancement." She said "the people deserve peace, order and political stability" "We have seen through many upheavals."

She said that if "I have deemed concern for the personal circumstances of the former President, it is not a sign of diminished determination on our part to close it is our sensitivity to the feelings of the segments of our mass who continue to identify with his personal circumstances."

The official reasons are obvious rubbish. They conceal the narrow objective—political expediency to save her beleaguered presidency.

The extraordinary uniting of sources of legal process and privileges granted to Estrada during the past six years has severely undermined the institutional foundations of the law administration of justice. The judicial system is the first casualty of the pardon.

The pardon has already divided the country probably more deeply than before. The Presidency has been greeted with the civil society groups that have played much more by the institutional underpinnings of a fair judicial system.

'Terrible calamity'

Even the Roman Catholic hierarchy was alienated, along with such valued political allies as former President Fidel V. Ramos. In conclusion, Ramos blasted the pardon as "a terrible, very life-calamity on the great majority of the Filipino people who have suffered from the plunder."

There is no sign that the pardon will have helped to ease Estrada's urban poor constituency. When Estrada added 5,000 supporters to San Juan on Friday to applaud Mrs Arroyo for giving him back his freedom, they were largely imported. Instead, they boosted claims the President's ranks was thinning.

Mr Arroyo overtaken the Estrada factor as a key to political peace and stability. Similarly, Estrada has overestimated his pivotal role in destabilizing the Arroyo administration.

Estrada was not a key factor in the 8-9 revolt of the May senatorial election to be one of the opposition. The upsurge of opposition was not because of Estrada's effort to make it a referendum between him and Mrs Arroyo, but because of the damaging issues against the administration.

Dangerous rift

The President's sovereign had thought that by reinstating Estrada from the picture, the pardon would allow her to consolidate her power. She was crumbling under the pressures of corruption scandals over the broadband contract with the Chinese telecommunication company ZTE, and the rash payoff to congressional allies over the release of the national budget and controversy" in her annual state of the nation address.

Force for righteousness

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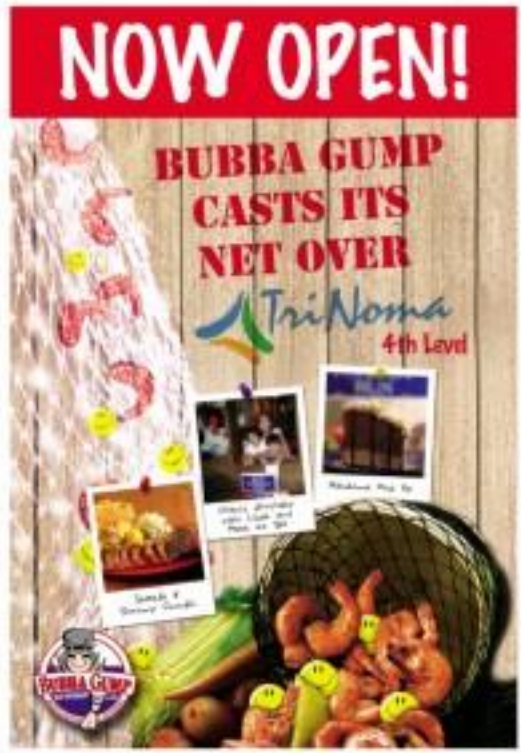
Rebel soldiers offered jobs as VIP bodyguards



From page A1

dismissal without formal charges and a dishonorable dismissal?

The 26 dismissed Rangers found out last week, P8,000 each as a "humanitarian" gesture from the Philippine Army and offers from individuals to serve as bodyguards to MPs.

One of them, Cpl. Medel Caldo, told this Inquirer in a phone interview yesterday that of the amount, P1,000 was for transportation and the rest was the Army's "cash assistance."

In my speaking private, Lt. Col. Florencio Taruc, said that the money was meant to augment the soldiers' expenses for their immediate needs, such as food and transportation, following their release.

Welfare fund

"It was part of a humanitarian consideration. The Army has a morale and welfare fund for this purpose," Taruc said by phone.

Taruc added that the Rangers would receive their salaries until the end of the month.

Of course, Caldo said, P8,000 was not enough to tide the dismissed Rangers over until they find new jobs to support their families.

He said his fellow Rangers have been offered jobs and recommended for various employment, including serving as bodyguards to very important persons (VIPs).

But Caldo, 33, said he was still deciding if he wanted to be a security aide.

3-year-old son

Apparently, Caldo wants to be convinced. He has a 3-year-old son with his wife Sharon.

"I'd rather have a more stable job," Caldo told this Inquirer in Filipino.

Caldo added that the Army's personnel department had offered to "help" the dismissed soldiers, after telling them that they would still appeal the decision of the Army chief, Lt. Col. Alexander Yano.

"But I really don't know what kind of help they needed," he said.

Deeply hurt

Caldo said he and his fellow Rangers were deeply hurt by the Army's decision. To them, they had served the Armed Forces of the Philippines well.

Caldo had been with the Army for more than nine years and had fought communist guerrillas in Quezon, Bicol, Laguna, Batangas and several provinces in Mindanao, and the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan and Jolo.

His colleagues are just as hurt, he stressed.

Indeed, Caldo said, with the assistance of their lawyers, they are prepared to seek a reconsideration of Yano's decision.

He said his fellow soldiers want to leave the service with a clean record, and not with the stigma of a "dishonorable discharge," especially since that they are trying to rebuild their lives and move on, Caldo said.

"Some of us still want to go back to the service but for others, it's OK to leave the service but not because of a dishonorable discharge," he said.

Lost benefits

Caldo emphasized that the dismissed soldiers were aware that it would be difficult for them to find employment with a tainted record.

Moreover, they would lose all the benefits and privileges that they had worked for as part of the military.

"Look for those who would be recommended by such by influential people. But what will happen to us if we'll apply for a job on your own and you'll have to say that your dismissal from the service was because of a dishonorable discharge?" Caldo said.

Intercepted in Sipocot

Caldo's unit was accused by the military of transporting guns for the supposed mutineers in the Oakwood siege against the Arroyo administration in February last year. They were intercepted at a checkpoint in Sipocot, Camarines Sur.

But their lawyer, Vicente Verbatim, said the soldiers' detainment came from a legitimate order and, in fact, the troops were on their way back to their headquarters in Albay.

Then commanding officer, Lt. Jesse Cordero, and executive officer, Lt. Ferdinand Caballes, are still detained at Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, with 14 other Rangers and 26 fellow officers from the First Scout Ranger Regiment and Philippine Marines, who were tagged as leaders of the alleged coup attempt.

Without due process

"We were never given due process. It was done just like that. We were given a dishonorable discharge. We are only hoping for an explanation," Caldo said.

In dismissing the soldiers, the Army said in investigations found a "preponderance of evidence" that the 26 soldiers violated Articles of War 97 (conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman) and 96 (conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline).

The soldiers were detained for more than a year at Camp Capinpin without formal charges.

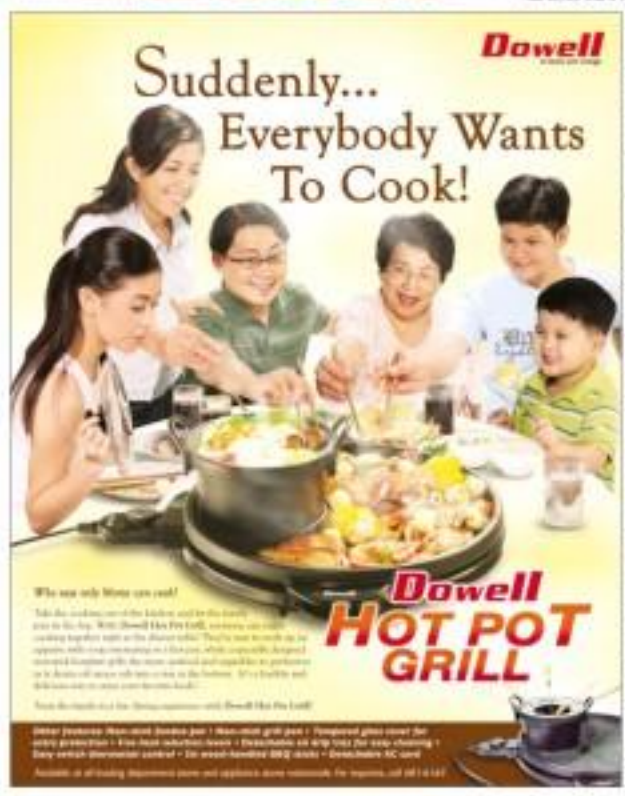
On Wednesday, they were taken from the Army camp and brought to the Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, where they were served their discharge orders.

Two days later, the 26 detained military officers expressed their disgust over the dismissal of their men, which they blamed on Armed Forces chief of staff, Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr.

Electoral fraud

In an unsigned statement, the group said that through Yano, the military chief chose to dismiss the Rangers instead of facing their challenge for him to answer allegations that he took part in the electoral fraud in 2004.

The detained military officers, led by former Marine commandant Major Gen. Ernesto Mirasol, former First Scout Ranger Regiment commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, and Medal of Valor awardee, Marine Col. Ariel Querubin, are charged with mutiny for allegedly leading the botched February coup.



Scientists scan world . . .

From page A1

rush ... We will wait until we know there's no tsunami," he said, as everyone in the room closely watched the operation center's seismic display screen flashing information about the event.

Off Bengkulu, Sumatra

The computerized readings at first flash aired until they settled at 7.1 a few minutes later. The map showed that the quake hit some 170 kilometers off the southwestern coast of Bengkulu in Sumatra, an area that has been a center of seismic activity in recent years.

The tremor occurred at 8:02 a.m. local time (Indonesia), or 11:02 a.m. in Hawaii, weeks after the Dec. 13 quake in the same area that killed 23 people. Seventeen minutes later another shook buildings around the PTWC, but no tsunami was detected.

The PTWC, an agency under the United States' National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Noaa), routinely issued a local tsunami watch for nearby coastal areas.

Relayed to Indonesian authorities, the watch warned that "a local tsunami ... could affect coasts" within 100 kilometers from the epicenter, but cited that "a destructive, widespread tsunami threat does not exist."

Tide gauge

Shortened from at first tense calls, seven minutes went on the operation center's floor anticipating a potential deadly wave. On normal drills, these would only be two minutes. The whole time, officers were waiting for the spike from a tide gauge in Padang, Indonesia, the one closest to the quake's epicenter.

The team wanted to confirm whether side pressure, in the next would bring dangerous waves to shore as the gauge was located near the tremor's origin, said Heidi Weinstein, PTWC spokesperson.

"In an early we had to make an earthquake for you guys to do that first time, it won't be so close to home," Weinstein joking. It told the visitors, among which were a journalist from Indonesia.

"We're very conservative," joked Supervisor Charles McCreery.

Indeed, what were the chances of a quake happening at the same hour the PTWC was giving a briefing to reporters?

No damage

Around an hour and a half after sounding an initial bulletin, the PTWC ended the local watch issued over Indonesia. It was learned later that there were no reports of damages, injuries or deaths that resulted from the latest tremor.

The tsunami survey were observed by the coastal gauge at Bidung or by the deep ocean gauge off coastal Sumatra, Hawaii on this information, the last measuring with a rushed," said the bulletin.

While passively tracked with watching over movements within the Pacific Ocean, the morning office looks over the Indian Ocean and surrounding countries to provide a separate warning center for the new continent.

The PTWC works closely with the US Geological Survey, with a partner warning center in Alaska, and with meteorological and geophysical monitoring units in Australia, Japan and Russia for the effective and timely delivery of tsunami warnings to coastal villages near the site of offshore quakes.

Across the NATION

170 scientists urge halt to oil exploration

OIL EXPLORATION in Tañon Strait is being opposed by marine scientists all over the country. FILE PHOTO

By Alex Pal
Inquirer Visayas

DUMAGUETE CITY—MARINE SCIENTISTS FROM all over the Philippines have called on the government to stop the oil exploration initiated by the Department of Energy in Tañon Strait because of threats it poses on whales, dolphins, fish and other marine creatures, people's livelihood, and potentially irreplaceable and invaluable natural heritage.

The scientists made the call at the end of the 9th National Symposium on Marine Science convened by the Philippine Association of Marine Science in Bohol City.

Dr. Leonard Amparo, associate professor of the Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology at the University of the Philippines Diliman, e-mailed a copy of the resolution to the Inquirer yesterday noting it was signed by 170 scientists.

Tañon Strait, located between Cebu and Negros, was declared a protected seascape under Proclamation No. 1234 by then President Fidel V. Ramos in 1998 because of its unique ecosystem and diverse assemblage of dolphins and whales.

Eleven of the 25 species found in the Philippines can be sighted in the strait, which is also known to feeding, breeding and resting grounds for the marine mammals, the resolution said.

The scientists said common current, exploration drilling and actual oil mining would adversely affect the marine ecosystem and organisms dependent on it.

"Sound is very important to whales and dolphins as they use it for hunting, navigation and communication," the scientists said.

Amparo also has an ongoing study at the Tañon Strait that shows a drop in sightings of spinner dolphins since the D.R. Aniñon seismic survey started in 2005.

The scientists said the person used to evaluate the potential impact of seismic surveys and exploration oil drilling had procedural lapses, lacked transparency and appropriate consultation with stakeholders.

"It failed to seriously and adequately consider substantial scientific evidence on the potential detrimental impacts of such activities to marine animals like mammals and fish," they said.

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800 state university students in Laguna cry out for funding

SAN PEDRO, LAGUNA—MORE than 800 college students here are not sure if they can still continue their schooling next semester.

Since June, the municipality has stopped funding the seven-year Polytechnic University of the Philippines' extension.

Thus, the contractual and part-timers in the university have yet to get their salaries and allowances. Angelico Poblete, school director, told the Inquirer.

He said the municipal government should look at the situation of the teachers who were unpaid for the entire semester and the students who were supposed to have their enrollment last week.

On Thursday, more than 600 students, accompanied by their parents and teachers, marched from the campus to the municipal hall to appeal for continued financial support.

Joel Initial, PUP-SMZ student council president, said the students were placed in a situation that deprived them of their right to education.

Initial said most of the students might stop studying if the school closed down.

He said that even if they were transferred to other PUP extensions, they could still not afford the transportation expenses.

A majority of the students are residents of San Pedro and they simply walk to school.

"If we have to save for the P500 tuition per semester, we can't afford the transportation cost every day!" he asked.

He said the students had no choice but to go to the streets to protest incumbent Mayor Calixto Catapang.

The San Pedro extension was founded in 2002 through a memorandum of agreement between the PUP main campus and then Mayor Felicisimo Serrano.

The previous municipal councilors had also doubted a resolution, saying the municipality should yearly allocate P5 million to the university as a priority project of the town.

However, the MOA was not ratified and could not be enacted on by the incumbent mayor, Jane Oliveros, a consultant of the municipality told the students, teachers and parents in a dialogue.

Oliveros also assured out that the local government was empowering a budget deficit, which, he said, was incurred by the previous administration.

But the students doubted the municipal government's claims.

"How could the previous town fund us in five years, and the present town couldn't?" Initial said.

Oliveros assured the students that they could count back to school if the new MOA was ordered.

Asked when that will happen, he said the students would know on Oct. 31 if the mayor approved or disapproved the new MOA.

"Given the mayor time to think," he quipped. Nikko Catherine Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon

No funds for salary hikes, Tacloban gov says

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE PROBINcial government cannot comply with a Malacañang order to increase the salaries of its 2,220 employees by 10 percent this year for lack of funds.

"The problem with our national government is that while it issues orders for the increase in the salaries of employees in the local government units, it does not provide any funds for this purpose," Leyte Gov. Carlos Jericho Petilla said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo issued Executive Order No. 811 in June mandating a 10 percent increase in the compensation of all government personnel effective July 1, 2007.

Petilla said the province would need to save P42 million to raise the salaries of its permanent and casual employees, but it could not do so.

Besides, he said, the provincial government had already approved its P800-million budget this year when EO 811 was approved.

He planned to ask the Department of Budget and Management to reinstate Leyte from the steps increase this year.

"But I can assure our employees that they will receive this mandated 10 percent increase early next year," he said.

In the proposed 2008 annual budget, funds for a 16 percent wage increase for Capitol employees are provided, Petilla disclosed.

An official of the Provincial Association of Government Employees (Page), who asked not to be identified, said that capitol workers were still hoping for a pay raise this year.

"While we understand the predicament of the government, he has also to consider our present situation. Our income is no longer enough to meet our needs because of the spiraling prices of our commodities," the said.

The last time the employees received a salary adjustment was in 2000 or six years ago, the official said.

Provincial labor-issues Vincent Ermito said the employees would look forward to inviting their performance bonuses in December. The amounts ranges from P500 to P2,000, depending on the work evaluation, he said.

The province had earlier allocated P6.5 million for the performance bonus.

CAMPAIGNS IN CEMETERIES

While ceremonies in San Pablo City are being prepared for the two-day celebration of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, candidates continue to post campaign paraphernalia even on walls of graveyards like this one.

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Revoke pact with PPA, landowners ask gov

RAMAGAS CITY—LANDOWNERS AFFECTED by a 40-hectare property here have asked Gov. Vilma Santos-Recto to revoke a 2000 memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the provincial government and the Philippine Ports Authority which allegedly deprived them of their ownership rights.

Teodulfo Tolentino, who represents 179 private landowners in Barangays Bolbok, Ibo, Clara and Ilos Ilaya said the group would be forced to "summon her again" to appear before the Ombudsmans Public Assistance Bureau for not acting on the complaint it raised three months ago.

The memorandum, proposed to develop the property into an ecozone zone for the Barangka Port Development Project Phase 3 (BPDP Phase 3) within five years.

It was signed on July 11, 2000 by then Gov. Hermilando Mandanas and then PPA general manager Alfonso Cua, and will expire next year.

Under the MOU, the province would acquire the land and shoulder cost of improvements for zone development, while the PPA would construct, develop and maintain Phase 3 of the port.

The agreement will automatically become inoperative if the provincial government "failed to develop the delineated area into an economic zone."

Tolentino said the document was executed without the landowners' knowledge. "But most of us, our property is our lifeline. Sadly, our lifeline and our dreams were being mercilessly trampled upon," he said in an Oct. 15 letter to Recto and the provincial board.

In a hearing in August, PPA port manager Abe Cruz said that under the MOU, the landowners should first seek permission from the provincial government before selling their property.

He noted that the land could not be used for purposes other than "port related" since it was declared a port zone by then President Corazon Aquino.

Provincial administrator Victor Reyes said Recto was sticking to the plan of the previous provincial administration to develop the area into port-related purposes.

Instead of pushing for its revocation, Reyes believed the landowners could wait for the MOU to expire in June next year.

In their letter, Tolentino said the landowners tried five times but failed to meet with the governor since July 30.

On Aug. 13, Recto's representative, provincial legal officer Joel Ekamilo, finally met with them and advised them that the province would have solutions "without much trouble."

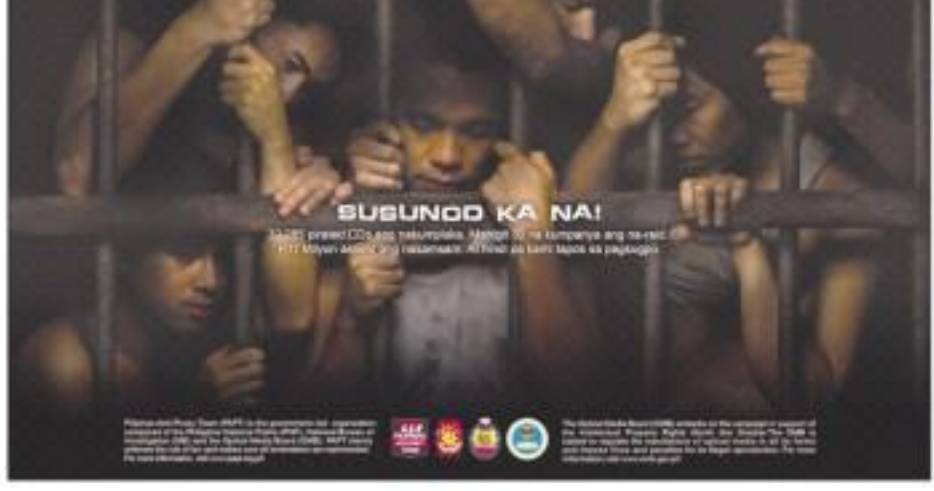
Tolentino said he had not heard anything from Mandanas or any representative from the province since then, forcing the group to request the Ombudsmans for mediation and assistance.

The Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees or Republic Act No. 6713 states that all public officials and employees should respond to letters, telegrams or other means of communication sent by the public "within 15 working days from receipt thereof."

The law also indicates that the given reply should contain the action taken on the request.

On Sept. 17, Opol director Marlyn Toreo-Gubaw issued a notice to Recto, Tranportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza and the PPA port manager requesting them to appear before the Dec. 1 mediation proceedings with the landowners.

Recto sent Mendoza in his representative to the hearing. Mirelee Alexander Lazaro, Inquirer Southern Luzon



5 dead in Catanduanes landslides; 3 missing

VIRAC, CATANDUANES—HORSY rains induced by a low pressure area on Saturday caused flooding and numerous landslides, which killed five people in three towns, disaster officials said yesterday.

Soc Joseph C. Cua, Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council (PDCC) chair, said the towns hit by landslides include Bato, Baras, San Miguel, San Andres and Caramoran.

He identified the fatalities in Bato town, 28 kilometers from the capital town, as Nelson Bersal, 37; Michelle Tenorio, 27; Nicole Marvin Bersal, 4; and, Reinhart Bersal, 3, all from Barangay Bagong Sheng.

The other fatality was 10-year-old Carmela Olit of Barangay Dororille.

The number and names of those injured were not yet available as of press time.

Cua added that three fishermen from Bato town had been reported missing.

The landslide hit areas were the villages of Bahongdong and Sibongguan in Bato; Sinuo, Dugdugan Baleo, and Sua in San Miguel; Lobas, Hamtikmac and Calabagan, Sur in San Andres; Panahuman and Danao in Caramoran; and Balacbac, Subsuban, Tibol, Pananlaan and Poblacion in Baras.

The centers in the northern towns along the circumferential road as well as the Bato-Baras-Gigmoto national secondary road have been blocked by landslides, Cua said.

Lt. Henry Pabolocoy, commander of Alpha Company of the Army's 83rd Infantry Battalion, said a chopper was on its way to Catanduanes to deliver election paraphernalia and conduct a reconnaissance survey of the landslide hit areas.

The heavy rains, which began past 11 a.m. on Saturday until after midnight Sunday, was induced by an active low pressure area that remained stationary at 40 kilometers north of Catanduanes as of Sunday morning.

Rains deep more from northeastern monsoon flowing from the Pacific Ocean

More Sports stories on A27 to 30

Late SPORTS

Beverage Masters bounce back; Realtors score

By Mecong B. Corrilla

LORDY TEGLER SCORED 13 POINTS in the final 4:56 last night to key Magnolia's 69-58 victory over Coca-Cola in the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup eliminations at the Araneta Coliseum.

Regala's scoring burst helped the five-straight Masters district a 75-68 lead and bounce back from a defeat to Purefoods to take their record to 3-1.

Coca-Cola, after opening up with an 11-7 decision of Missouri last Oct. 19, went down for the second straight night.

"As you could see, we're struggling," said coach Jose Dimaguiguis. "We're still looking for ways to give everyone minutes."

Ato Ular held it together for a full game and finally won one, pipping Talk 'N Text, 67-67, in the second game.

The Realtors improved to 2-2, while Talk 'N Text dropped to 2-2.

Tenorio
FORTUNE
MAGNOLIA 69 – Regala 17, Asaro 12, J. Villanueva 11, Mallillin 10, J. Villanueva 7, Tenorio 4, Tegler 3, Cortez 3, Hontiveros 2, Fortuna 0, Pacinio 0, Escobal 0, Cruz 0, Mercado 0

COCA-COLA 58 – Peek 16, Mac Ui 12, Gamalo 11, Jugo 11, Sonnio 6, Galang 1, Torre 0, Rivera 0, Fernando 0, Ong 0.

Quarters: (15-14, 35-34, 50-42, 69-58)

Second Game

UEL 67 – Ular 20, Mendoza 14, Villena 11, Hinolan 10, Ong 6, Cruz 5, Reyes 3, Mendoza 0, Tolentino 0, Bermejo 0, Cristobal 0, Gonzalez 0

TALK N' TEXT 67 – Giang 24, Alvarenga 13, Cardona 11, Dionisio 10, Mendoza 7, Mendoza 2, Ramirez 0, Tolibao 0, Abadia 0, Alfaro 0, Zaldy 0.

Quarters: (8-16, 32-35, 51-52, 67-67)

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  - 10 Yr. Convertible Term

Aplus METRO

mobile news

Metro police to check voting centers

QC cops tighten watch on 'areas of concern'

By Allison W. Lopez, Kristine L. Alave and Bonnah M. del Rosario

METRO MANILA POLICE CHIEF GEARY BARIAS yesterday ordered his top officials to inspect some of the schools in their areas which would be used as voting centers for today's barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections.

The memorandum from the National Capital Region Police Office director was addressed to the heads of the five police districts in the metropolis.

In particular, Barias listed two schools in each police district which he ordered his men to inspect as it is an "area of concern."

Officials of the Manila Police District were tasked to inspect the F. Guerrero Elementary School on R Duvanon Street in Sta. Cruz and the Ramon Magsaysay High School on Espeleta, Santa Mesa.

On the other hand, Southern Police District officials were ordered to check the Bonifacio Elementary School on J.P. Rizal Extension, Barangay West Rembo, Makati and the Signal Village High School in Signal Village, Taguig.

For the Quezon City Police District, their assignment was to inspect the Bagong Pag-Asa Elementary School on N.S. Bernardo Street, Barangay Bagong Pag-Asa and the Batasan Hill National High School on Batasan Road.

Northern Police District heads, meanwhile, were assigned to check the Caloocan City High School on 10th Avenue West, Caloocan City and the Geo. T. de Leon Elementary and High School in Malaboñga.

EPD assignment

Lastly, Eastern Police District officials were ordered to inspect the Andres Bonifacio Integrated School on Acacia Lane, Mandalay Elementary School on Carmelo Avenue Extension, Barangay Plainview, Pasig.

EPD chief, Senior Supt. Nicolas de la Cruz, said he has ordered more police patrols over the weekend in preparation for today's synchronized elections.

While there were no election hotspots in his area, De la Cruz assured residents that the city police force has enough security for any emergency.

"EPD is well prepared. There are no hotspots in my area of responsibility. However, all precincts will have security in case of any contingency," he said.

In Rizal province, police director Senior Supt. Teodoro Peñones said that his men have been on red alert with checkpoints set up on major roads.

According to Peñones, some 60 bigas in the towns of Rodriguez and Tanay, as well as communities in the mountainous area of Antipolo City, have been classified as areas of immediate concern.

He added that he conducted inspections in the provinces over the weekend to check his men's security preparations.

Taking a more proactive approach, the Quezon City police said they would be increasing their visibility in 11 barangays considered as "areas of concern" in today's polls.

QC 'hot spots'

Considered "hotspots" are Barangays Sauyo, Baltazar Tora, Talipapa, Pasong Tamo, Nagkaisang Nayon, North Fairview, Holy Spirit, Payatas, Batasan Hills, Commonwealth and Bagbag.

"We have all the precincts in the city's 142 barangays surveyed," said Supt. Bernardo Balba, intelligence chief of the Quezon City Police District. He reiterated, however, that they would be paying more attention to the areas of concern to prevent elections-related violent incidents.

QCPD chief, Senior Supt. Hinirangged Gamboa, told the Inquirer that they would be fielding 750 policemen in polling places, with an additional 750 from Camp Crame.

"Our patrol cars would be ready to respond to any incident as they would be stationed in strategic locations," Gamboa said.

NO ART FAN
A participant in a mural-painting contest at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Muntinlupa puts the finishing touches to his entry, taking no notice of a goat in the background which seems no disapprover of his work.

Protesting teachers to wear black shirts

By Bonnah M. del Rosario

SAMAHAN PUBLIC SCHOOL teachers who are serving as to-day's synchronized barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections will be wearing black T-shirts as a sign of protest following the filing of criminal charges against 13 of their colleagues by a defeated candidate in the May 14 elections.

On Oct. 22, former Malabon-Navotas Rep. Federico "Ricky" Sandoval filed charges of double-voting and vote-buying against the teachers at the city prosecutor's office. In particular, he accused them of conspiring to keep his poll watchers out of voting premises.

Sandoval ran for Navotas mayor but lost to Toby Tiangco, the incumbent.

Esperanza Rosos, president of the Association of Public Elementary School Teachers (PEAT), said the charges filed against the teachers were "senseless" as they were just doing their job.

Among those charged were Yolanda Feliciano of the Navotas Elementary School, Susan Mabalot and Jo Ann Cruz of the Bagumbayan School, Aracela Lumbad, Rosario de Aguilar, Cecilia de Castro and Marina Alejandro of the Bangkulasi Elementary School.

Also charged were Mercedita Lanuzaa, Claudia Enriquez and Marilou Fesaro of the San Roque Elementary School and Teodora Arboguda and Marivic Capuli of the Dagat-dagatan Elementary School.

DID YOU KNOW

CAST SCRIPT Roberto Reyes was born on Oct. 29, 1938 in Tondo, Manila. Considered as the Father of Philippine Comics, Villanueva-credited Komiks, which first came out on Jan. 11, 1929 the Liwayway magazine, introduced the first Komiks strip. He was awarded from the Graphic Arts Service Inc. in 1980. A Special Award from the Citizens Council for Mass Media in 1977. The Gawad CCP para sa Sining from the College of Comic of the Philippines in 1983, and the Life Achievement Award from Komiks Syndicators Brotherhood in 1988. (Source: CCP Encyclopedia of Art, Patrons Inquirer Research)

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MMDA cracks down on road 'distractions'

By DJ Yap

HAWKERS, STREAMERS AND other advertising materials on road right-of-ways in Metro Manila were ordered removed yesterday by Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

Fernando said the sidewalk clearing operations were meant to minimize distractions to the streets as motorists began their yearly exodus to their home provinces for All Saints' Day.

He said advertising posses featuring celebrities and models had been known to distract motorists traveling on major roads like Edsa, sometimes leading to accidents—a claim disputed by advertising firms and which had led to some court entanglements.

MMDA General Manager Bolsen Bautanovan said the agency was not singling out any advertising firm, pointing out that even banners put up by politicians to express support for the administration were being torn down.

Fernando said there was "public clamor" for the MMDA to extend its sidewalk clearing operations even to secondary roads to help ease traffic flow and to maximize power in the community.

"In the past, our sidewalk clearing operation was limited to the major thoroughfares but the agency will now undertake the same duties even to inner streets," he said.

He added that the agency hopes to clear all Metro Manila roads by 2008 as part of the "Metro Ganap" project of the Arroyo administration.

"Let me stress that the removal of illegal posters, banners and advertising displays are included," he said.

Group opens spay/neuter clinic for strays

By Mabel D. Salazar

A POPULATION BOOM AMONG stray or feral cats and dogs has become one of the biggest problems faced by local governments and animal welfare groups.

To solve the problem, these groups have suggested that strays be spayed or neutered to prevent them from producing "unwanted offspring."

Among the organizations that have been advocating this cause is the Compassion and Responsibility for Animals (Cara) Philippines which has been aggressively promoting the Trap-Neuter-Release Campaign since its formation in 2000.

Spaying and neutering are safe procedures for removing the reproductive organs of dogs and cats, according to Cara. Animals who are operated on become healthier and less vulnerable to diseases contrary to the belief that they would become less useful.

Under the program, stray cats and dogs are rounded up, neutered or spayed before they are released.

Just recently, Cara opened a spay/neuter (S/N) clinic in Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City.

Sharon Jadwani, Cara vice president, said that the clinic, which is solely for spaying and neutering stray animals, "is a world-class one."

"The immensity of the problem of overpopulation resulting in homeless animals prompted us to speed up things," Jadwani said.

The new clinic on Orense Street is being "touted for free" for two years by Claudia Tantoco, whose family owns Ceriaco Holdings and Development Corp.

Tantoco is a friend of Cara president Nancy Co Ito, a group who said that the group has extended to many strays that Claudia rescued.

The operations are performed by veterinarians who volunteer their services.

"We actually have a number of animals for spay/neuter every week," said Alba Sta. Ana, coordinator of Cara.

She added: "We are also afraid to see the day when vets will refuse doing S/N because it has become a clinic rather than a sympathetic project."

Jadwani said the Cara S/N Clinic is also intended for low income families who cannot afford the service. The vets charge P350 for spaying and P300 for castration.

According to her, it is important that the animals have homes to go home to after surgery because they don't have a recovery room in the clinic.

The recuperation period for female animals is 10 days and about three to five days for males.

"Perhaps we can accommodate homeless animals, but only for a minimum number of days," she said.

The clinic also has to set a limit on the number of animals it can attend to because of its limited financing and manpower. At present, Cara wants to hire a veterinarian to perform the surgeries.

She quickly pointed out that they are not competing with other animal clinics. "Cara clinic is mainly an alternative low cost spay facility for those who are hard-hard with too many animals under their care," she added.

Cara's thrust is basically animal birth control and education (ABC&E). Once it started, the group has been into the Trap-Neuter-Return campaign. The volunteers' cars for the animals until they have fully recovered.

THE CLINIC charges from P250 to P500 for its services.

CARA volunteers celebrate the opening of the Spay/Neuter Clinic in Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City.

Lim wants condemned buildings demolished immediately

By Tina G. Santos

ERMITA MAYOR ALFREDO Lim has ordered the demolition of condemned buildings in the city.

"For the sake of public safety, these condemned buildings must go," Lim said the other day.

He cited City Council Resolution No. 74 which calls for the immediate demolition of all condemned buildings and infrastructures in Manila, citing safety and aesthetic considerations.

Lim, in particular, ordered city officials to give building owners a maximum of 15 days to one month to comply with the resolution before the city government takes over the demolition job.

According to building official Melvin Balagot, Manila has 35 condemned structures, mostly in Sta. Cruz, Intramuros, Tondo, Quiapo, Malate, San Nicolas and Sta. Mesa, whose owners had been served demolition notices.

Vice Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso, city council presiding officer, said the condemned buildings and infrastructures pose a danger to the public as they could collapse anytime and injure or kill bystanders and pedestrians, or cause damage to property.

METROBRIEFS

Woman loses P1.5M

A JEWELER lost P1.5 million worth of cash and jewelry to unidentified robbers who broke into her house in Caloocan City while she was on vacation. Rowena Bello, 39, said the same house Saturday night to find that the locks to her house in Sauyo Road Village, Barangay Pasong Putik had been destroyed. A check of her belongings showed that the robbers, which she said in her bedroom were missing. Those included two diamond rings, a diamond necklace, a necklace with a diamond pendant, a diamond bracelet and a pair of pearl earrings. Also taken by the robbers were P25,000 in cash.

Kenneth M. del Rosario

Local execs face raps

MANILA Mayor Alfredo Lim yesterday warned against the election of unscrupulous candidates in today's barangay polls after the arrest of three barangay councilors from Pasay City who pretended to be Manila city government employees. In a directive to Senior Supt. Win Gutierrez, chief of the Manila City Hall Police Office, Lim ordered the filing of criminal cases against Augusto de Castro Castro Jr., and Eva Prado, 46. The complaints against the two were filed by Emily Salang of the Air Jacket International Manpower Services and Manila Hotels, of the Manila Hotels International Service. The victims said the two asked them for money in exchange for facilitating the processing of their companies' business requirements. The suspects claimed to be employees of the Manila City Hall business promotion and development office.

Alison W. Lazo

BUSTED STOPLIGHT ON INTERSECTION

From Elvin, 24, Barbarian, Paranaque City: "The stoplight at the intersection of Roxas Boulevard and Airport Road in Paranaque City has been busted for more than two months now. Some motorists racing obviously commit traffic violations because of it. Pakidagdag naman ang mga ito sa listahan ng mga kailangang ayusin ng lungsod. (I hope the agency in charge of this problem takes action right away. Pakisabihan naman ang mga taong ito na sana nirespeto nila ang mga batas.)"

Citizen's call

Who will be next victim?

I WAS attacked by a mentally ill man recently while walking from my office on E. Rodriguez Avenue near St. Luke's Hospital. I was hospitalized for three days because of a fractured nasal bone and I was unable to work for more than a week. The man who attacked me has not been arrested by the police and is now again out in the streets waiting for another victim. My HMO card did not even cover my hospital bill so where is justice for me?

[A]THERINE ING, 40, Quezon City

Noisy teeners, loud music at Tatalon, Quezon City

KINDLY help us bring to the attention of the authorities concerned the presence of a group of teenagers hanging around in our area who make too much noise with their loud music and excessive shouting at the top of their voices up to the wee hours in the morning. Bus drivers taking our shoes. Thank you.

EMANUEL INT. GARVIDA, 45, Maranggul Street, Caloocan, Quezon City

No respite from cagers in Makati basketball court

THE basketball court on Mayo Street in Barangay Pinag-Makati City, near a big warehouse building is the bane of residents in the area. We are burdened by the incessant shouting of players who dribble all night on it court. There have also been several incidents where passersby are hit by the ball. Who can help us with this problem? Also, when will the construction work on the warehouse building be over?

REY M. Makati City

A job for BFAD!

WE ARE wondering if consumers which sell sandwich bags and freezer bags made in China, as clearly seen in the label, were given a stamp of approval by the Bureau of Food and Drugs. We're a lot of items from China were under scrutiny. maybe someone should look into this since it is a food safety issue. Thanks.

L. CATUBIGAN JR. Makati City

Drought in 3 US states fuels battle over water

CUMMING, GEORGIA — As its stream drought in the southeastern United States has fueled a water war, a new battle over controlling water resources that pits man against monarch.

Millions of people in the states of Georgia fear their taps could run dry, while environmentalists in Florida say the treasure needs to be protected under the US Endangered Species Act risk dying off.

Arguing to guarantee its own well go thirsty, Georgia authorities want to dramatically reduce the outflow from a reservoir that supplies drinking water to three million people. But neighboring Alabama claims that would have devastating economic effects on its population, while Florida says a reduced flow would threaten fragile ecosystems.

"Don't think people would come before seriously," said Bob Lemley, 55, walking on sandmud that was once under Lake Lanier's waters.

The state-made lake is at the frontline of the battle of words. It supplies drinking water for more than three million people in the city of Atlanta, feeds the Chattahoochee river that runs along the border with Alabama and flows into Florida's Apalachicola river.

Because of the drought, the 38,000 acre reservoir is almost five meters below average levels, and officials say the water will continue to drastically.

Georgia has filed a legal motion seeking to have the US Army Corps of Engineers, which manages the reservoir, to limit the release of water. Alabama and Florida both oppose the motion.

"The State of Georgia is suffering a drought of historic proportions and is facing potentially dire and irreparable consequences if the United States Army Corps of Engineers does not immediately stop depleting the reservoir," Georgia's governor said in a recent news conference on the banks of the receding lake.

Perdue asked US President George W. Bush to temporarily exempt Georgia from the Endangered Species Act, under which mayfly from the reservoir is linked to the survival levels of the purple bankclimber and fat three-ridge mussels in the Apalachicola River.

The governors of Alabama and Florida have asked the president to reject Perdue's request.

Alabama Gov Bob Riley warned the measure sought by Georgia would "have dire consequences on people and their livelihoods downstream in Alabama" and could lead to the shut-down of a nuclear power plant and industries along the Chattahoochee River. AFP

WorldBriefs

Researchers aim to use mosquitos to fight malaria

RIDGEVILLE, Maryland — A US scientist is leading an international team of researchers using an army of blood-sucking mosquitos to produce a genetically potent vaccine against malaria. Stephen Hoffman, 58, founded Sanaria Inc., a biotech firm solely dedicated to the production of a vaccine against malaria, a mosquito-borne disease that kills one million people a year, many of them African children. At this lab, researchers breed mosquitos capable of transmitting malaria to humans with blood contaminated with Plasmodium falciparum. Researchers infect the parasites to make the mosquitos' intestines and then to their salivary gland. The mosquitos are then delicately taken to a new chamber where they are briefly treated with radiation to weaken the parasites. Researchers extract the weakened parasites and purify them, making the vaccine. One weakened parasites triggered an immune reaction powerful enough to protect against malaria more than 90 percent of the time for at least 10 months, Hoffman said. Those results were based on a trial conducted among 36 adults, he said. AFP

Taiwan to become No. 2 microchip maker

TAIPEI — Taiwan will overtake the United States to become the world's second-biggest exporter of computer chips this year, the state Central News Agency reported Sunday. Taiwan will account for 19 percent of global semiconductors, behind Japan with 24 percent, the agency said, citing a report by the official Industrial Technology Research Institute. The sector has been boosted by the continuing expansion of plants producing 12-inch (300-mm) wafers in Taiwan, said institute analyst Pengchun Chu. In the three months to December, Taiwan's semiconductor factories are expected to churn out 630,000 12-inch wafers, 16 percent more than a year ago, he said. The United States and South Korea are expected to be a third with a 17 percent share. AFP

No women elected in Omani vote

MUSCAT — Oman's 84 member advisory Shura Council will have no women members after 211 female candidates failed to win seats in Saturday's election. The outgoing 80 (Shura Council, elected in 2003, had two women members. The Gulf Arab state has been ruled since 1970 by Sultan Qaboos bin Said, who appoints the Cabinet. Saturday's vote was preceded by a public election campaign, a first for Oman, where most people still vote along tribal lines rather than on the policies of the candidates. Reuters

OMANI voter

For sale on eBay: Pol Pot's Benz

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia — Car collectors with massive tastes and at least 35,000 British pounds ($71,000) to spare now have a chance to own a limousine reportedly used by Pol Pot, the late chief of Cambodia's murderous Khmer Rouge. The white Mercedes 600 Pullmann (left) stretch limousine ... previously used by one infamous owner Pol Pot, who led the Khmer Rouge during its genocidal regime in Cambodia from 1975-1979," reads a listing on the online auction site eBay. AP

AGAINST IRAQ, AFGHAN WARS AND BUSH
Thousands of antiwar protesters march through the streets of Chicago, en route to a rally at Chicago's Federal Plaza Dec. 27. AP/File

Gadhafi says Darfur talks doomed to failure

SIRTE, LIBYA — LIBYAN LEADER Moamar Gadhafi on Saturday said peace talks to end violence in Darfur were doomed to failure because of the absence of the main rebel groups in the conflict.

Despite the declaration of a ceasefire by the Sudanese government, the region's key rebel groups have boycotted the United Nations and African Union-sponsored talks.

Addressing the opening of the conference hosted by the Libyan leader in the Mediterranean resort of Sirte, Gadhafi said the absent Sudan Liberation Movement/Army and the Justice and Equality movement were "fundamental" to peace in Darfur.

"I consider their leaders to be my sons, even if they are disobedient, but without them we cannot make peace."

"I see that the conference must stop here," he said, before launching a broadside against the talks' sponsors, saying the UN and AU were not competent bodies to resolve "a tribal conflict."

"Foreign intervention" in such a domestic conflict "only makes things worse," he said, before suggesting that the 23-nation community of failed Arab states which he presides over was a better bet to forge peace in Darfur.

A UN diplomat played down the impact of Gadhafi's speech, saying on condition of anonymity the declaration of a ceasefire by Sudan's government that followed the Libyan leader's speech, was a much more significant development.

"We commit ourselves to respecting this unilateral cessation," said Sadiq Ali Sadiq, a top aide to President Omar al-Bashir who called on the international community to impose sanctions on those who failed to comply with the ceasefire.

The conference opened with a warning from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon that rebel leaders who stayed away from the talks had much to lose.

"I am disappointed that some movement leaders have chosen to stay away from Sirte today. To them, I wish to say that the door remains open, for that if they continue to stay away, there is much they stand to lose," said a message from Ban delivered by UN Special Envoy Jan Eliasson. AFP

Cancellations as Air France strike enters 4th day

PARIS — A STRIKE BY AIR France flight attendants left thousand passengers facing delays and cancellations for a fourth day Sunday, with long-haul flights among the hardest hit.

At Paris' main Charles de Gaulle airport, passengers crowded around check-in counters hoping that their flights would be called.

At one airport terminal, 36 out of 40 flights were cancelled, including long-haul flights to Johannesburg, Rio de Janeiro and Singapore. At another terminal, nine out of 26 flights were grounded.

Air France had estimated that 60 percent of its flights would take off on Sunday, with the figure rising to 75 percent on Monday.

The strike is planned to continue until at least midnight (2100 GMT) on Monday.

Unions representing flight attendants launched the strike on Thursday to demand better pay and conditions. It has been followed by more than three quarters of staff.

Air France said Friday it had taken legal action against those who were striking a total of 45 million euros ($66 million) in compensation for their losses. It has accused them of having failed to negotiate in the run up to the strike. AFP

As wraps come off in car shows, 'auto spies' go undercover

CHIBA, JAPAN — JAPANESE AUtomakers were raising for maximum publicity as the covers came off their sleek new models at the Tokyo Motor Show this week, assuaged not by popping champagne corks and glamorous models.

But some cars were drawing slightly too much attention for automakers' comfort as the more serious business of spying on rivals' vehicles got underway discreetly, along with efforts to protect products from enemy eyes.

Many foreign automakers and parts suppliers are eager to get every detail of the industry's newest exhibits, which they hope to use for their own products, according to senior industry experts.

Although no Chinese automakers and parts suppliers had stands at the motor show, they were also there in force as people to the event to take notes and pictures of the latest designs, along with others from elsewhere in Asia, they said.

"It's a common practice," Osuke Sakae Secretary-general analyst Koji Endo said.

And it works both ways.

"Japanese automakers are also doing that in Frankfurt or in America," he said.

Auto industry people admit there is exactly what Japanese automakers were doing in the 1960s.

"Now the Chinese makers have alliances with key global automakers so they are obtaining more knowledge and resources to manufacture vehicles," said Kiyotami Tokui, an auto analyst with CSM Worldwide.

"If the time comes, it may be very challenging for Japanese automakers, especially in the mini-car segment. But it will not happen in the very foreseeable future," he said. AFP

JAPAN'S Mazda displays its next generation concept sports car "Taki."

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Quirico

Turkey threatens incursion into Iraq

IRAQI Kurd children play on old tanks of ousted Saddam Hussein's army, Oct. 27 in Dohuk, 120 km north of the Kurdish city of Erbil. AP

SIRNAK, TURKEY—TURKISH PRIME MINISTER Tayyip Erdogan threatened on Saturday to order an incursion into northern Iraq against Kurdish guerrillas after the failure of talks with Iraq aimed at averting a cross-border raid.

"The moment an operation is needed, we will take that step," Erdogan told a large flag-waving crowd in Sirnak. "We don't need to ask anyone's permission."

The talks collapsed late on Friday after Ankara rejected proposals by Iraqi Defense Minister Gen. Abdel Qader Jassim for tackling guerrillas based in northern Iraq as insufficient and because they would not yield results quickly enough.

Turkey has massed up to 100,000 troops, backed by fighter jets, helicopter gunships, tanks, and mortars, on the border for a possible offensive against about 3,000 rebels using Iraq as a base from which to carry out attacks in Turkey.

The United States, which maintains representation at the talks, opposes a major incursion, fearing it could destabilize the relatively peaceful north of Iraq and the entire region.

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) launched its separatist campaign in 1984, since when more than 30,000 people have died.

Erdogan took a swipe at western countries for not cracking down on the PKK and said calling it a terrorist group, as the United States and European Union do, was not enough.

"We want action, and if you can't show action, you fail the assembly test," he said. "Those who overlook terrorists acts in cooperation with terrorism," he told a conference earlier.

Army sources said on Saturday that military planes were making reconnaissance flights along the international border to photograph PKK camps in northern Iraq. Helicopters were patrolling villages and soldiers sweeping roads for mines.

Erdogan played down comments by Turkey's Armed Forces chief Gen. Yasar Buyukanit that the Turkish Army, Nato's second largest, was waiting for him to meet US President George W. Bush in Washington on Nov 5 before a major incursion.

US, Turkish top envoys downplayed disunity in recent weeks.

Senior Turkish diplomats say Erdogan has given Washington and Baghdad a limited time to show concrete results or steps to be taken against the PKK. Reuters

Warming revives flora, fauna in Greenland

By Sarah Lyall

NARSARSSUAQ, GREENLAND—A strange thing is happening at the edge of Inuit Sipuja's crop forest here.

By four oldest trees—the four oldest apple trees in Greenland, named Rosenvinge's trees after the Dutch botanist who planted them in an experiment in 1895—are waking up. After lapsing into woozy, sleepy old age, they are stubbornly now quite things of green at their tops.

"The old ones, they're having a second youth," said Sipuja, 70, who has watched the forest, called Qassiarsuuk, come to life, on fits and starts, since planting most of the trees in a 50 years ago. He boasted like a proud grandson. "They're growing again."

Although Greenland is the size of Europe, it has only nine conifer forests like Sipuja's, all of them cultivated. It has only 11 farms. Except for potatoes, the only vegetables most Greenlanders ever eat—to the extent that they eat vegetables at all—are imported, mostly from Denmark.

But now that the climate is warming, it is not just old trees that are growing. A Greenlandic supermarket is stocking locally grown cauliflowers, broccoli and cabbage this year for the first time. Eight sheep farmers are growing potatoes commercially. Five more are experimenting with vegetables. And Kenneth Høeg, the region's chief agricultural advisor, says he does not see why southern Greenland cannot eventually be filled of vegetable farms and stable forests.

"If it gets warmer, a large part of southern Greenland could be like this," Høeg said. Two and a half acres near here, imported pines, apricots, larches and firs are planted in the midst of the scrubby, rocky hillside next to the fjords, an startling an ecology.

"If it gets a little warmer, you could talk about a productive forest with enough wood for logs," Høeg said.

Further north, Greenland's great ice sheet is melting. But here in the subarctic south, the changes are more subtle and carry more promise.

"The limiting factor for human survival here is temperature, and there's a lot of benefits with a warmer climate," Høeg said.

"We are on the frontier of agriculture, and even a few degrees can make a difference." NYT

New York governor tries new tack on illegal immigrants' driver licenses

ALBANY, N.Y.—Gov. Eliot Spitzer of New York is leading off his plan to allow illegal immigrants to obtain the same kind of driver licenses as other New Yorkers, after weeks of anger over the proposal.

Instead, the governor said Saturday, the state would issue different classes of licenses. One license would also be a federally recognized identification card obtainable only by those who can prove they are legal residents of the United States and a second would not require proof of legal residency. A third would comply with the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, which will tighten identification requirements.

The federal card, which is part of Real ID, a program to develop a highly secure form of identification that would be phased in nationwide by 2013, would allow a person to board airplanes, or enter the United States, without carrying a passport. The more limited identification, which illegal immigrants would be eligible for, would not qualify as federal identification and would clearly say so.

The move to create different tiers of driver licenses followed a wave of criticism over the governor's proposal or a time when the issue of illegal immigration is stirring the national political debate, and many Democrats watched that Spitzer had put the party in political peril.

The new plan will probably do little if anything to quell the controversy over the issue, as people on both sides of the debate in New York expressed scornful reactions.

Under the plan, worked out in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security, New York is likely to become one of the first states to offer the new federal license; it intends to start as soon as the middle of next year. NYT

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Victory double by Frankie, Juvic

Miñoza ends Japan drought; Pagunsan breaks through in Asian Tour

By Inquirer Sports

FRANKIE MIÑOZA ENDED A SIX-year victory drought in the rich Japan Tour and Juvic Pagunsan capped a great weekend for Philippine golf by coming up with a spectacular Asian Tour breakthrough win in Indonesia yesterday.

The 37-year-old Miñoza won ¥24,000,000 (about $193,000) by topping Korean Lee Dong-hwa with a birdie on the first hole of a sudden death playoff for the ABC Championship in Hyogo prefecture after both players finished tied at 1-under 279.

It was the first championship in Japan for Miñoza, who won this year's Philippine Open for the second time last February since Tolling the Fukuoka Classic in 2001.

Pagunsan, 29, and last year's Asian Tour Rookie of the Year, finished birdie-eagle to complete a seven-under par 65 and come-from-behind victory in the Bentara Indonesia Presidents Invitational in Jakarta.

The quietly built star from Bacolod broke into tears after topping India's Jagarjeev Bhullar with a 54-under par 269 total and walking away with the winner's check of $333,333 (about P13.49 million).

With his first pro win, Pagunsan leaped to 32nd position from 85th on the Asian Tour's Order of Merit with total earnings of $92,927.

JUVIC Pagunsan: Last hole eagle does it.

FRANKIE Miñoza: Birdie on sudden death hole.

Miñoza, now with seven career wins in Japan, drained out with a two-under par 70 and found himself tied after 72 holes with Lee, who rallied with a 66 at the ABC Golf Club course.

The third shot of the two made the difference on the first extra hole—the par-5 13th—as Miñoza hit a wedge to within three feet of the hole before Lee's shot spun back from the edge of the green into the water en route to a double bogey.

After opening with a 69, Miñoza fired into a tie for first by shooting a 64 before slipping to second in the third round with a 71.

Shingo Katayama of Japan was third at 275.

Miñoza placed as high as second on the Asian Tour Order of Merit before moving seven starting last April, to the Japan circuit, where he finally struck paydirt on his 170th tournament of the season.

Ironically his second triumph of the year came after he missed the halfway cut a week earlier at the Bridgestone Open with rounds of 73-71.

Pagunsan, who started with rounds of 66-67, shot a 71 in the third round which he completed earlier in the day then moved two centuries with four birdies on the front nine.

"I am speechless, it was the perfect finish for me. I've enjoyed my time on the Asian Tour and this is what I've been waiting for in my career," said Pagunsan.

"I would like to dedicate this win to my wife (Maria Rhona) and my daughter (Ly) as they have supported me all the way. I would like to thank my agent, son and everyone who has been there for me," added the Filipino young gun.

Pagunsan fired out for the lead with a birdie on the 13th hole, fell back with a bogey on the 15th but stayed in touch with Bhullar with a par on the 16th.

Bhullar, playing in front of Pagunsan's flight that included veteran Ryder Cupper Lee Westwood of England, actually birdied the 17th and 18th but the Filipino also birdied 17 before reaching the par-5 18th green in two.

After Westwood holed a 25-foot putt for eagle to finish with a 73 and a tie for third spot alongside American Anthony Kim, Pagunsan worked his eight-foot birdie then roamed on first stabbing it, pumping his fist as Tiger Woods when the ball disappeared.

"I wasn't feeling it too well coming into the tournament but Tony Lascuna and Jerome Delatorre gave me a good lift on my outing which helped. They told I was playing too much on my swing so I remained focused, adjusted well for a top finish.

Delatorre earlier finished tied for 29th at 281 after a 71 while Gerald Skudero wound up at 286 after a 73. Lascuna missed the 36-hole cut.

With a report from Asian Tour News

PAYLA: Ironclad 14-

Payla a win from Olympics

By Glenda U. Free, Inquirer Libre

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS—FLYWEIGHT VILLETO Parlalcasad closer to an Olympic berth as he whipped Khalid Said of England, 20-13, Saturday to enter the round of 16 in the International Amateur Boxing Association World Boxing Championships at the University of Illinois-Chicago Pavilion here.

Standing in this way of Payla's dream was to-be 2008 Beijing Olympian in Siam, Ismael Amerian Ramirez Warrior, bronze medalist in the 2005 World Championships and, like the Filipino, a veteran of the 2004 Athens Olympics.

PAYLA, 6-0

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TRAINER Rosario Ripalda receives from Inquirer Publications president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez (fourth from left) the Trainer's trophy after his horse Traditional won in the 3rd Tumbok Cup race during the awarding ceremony also graced by (from left) Tumbok managing editor Noel Briones, PSC VP for racing Admiral Juan De Leon, commissioner Bebot Domingo...Max Prieto, Inquirer Publications Inc. VP for operations Rose Montero, Greg Perez and Paulo Prieto.

Traditional outpaces Tumbok Cup field

CARMONA, CAVITE—TRADITIONAL, ridden by Wellwood Basquel, picked up the pace heading into the final quarter yesterday and rallied to win the third edition of the Tumbok Cup at the San Lorenzo Leisure Park here.

The three-year-old Hero Dedicated filly, sired off as the first pick, broke out fourth in the six-horse field and slowly picked off the speedballs one by one to clock an impressive 1 minute and 35.6 seconds for the 1,500-meter race.

Her time, with quarters of 18, 35, 34, 30, rewarded owner Don Antonio Hontanosas, a long-time fixture in the races, the top prize of P180,000.

Serena Stein, probably the most battle-scarred entry in the field with Patty Dilema on top, finished second about four lengths off Traditional like was followed home by Mamuyo, Lady Lane, Midnight King and Thone Do in that order.

Inquirer Publications Inc. president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and board chair Marixi Prieto and husband Alec led a star-studded list of presenters of the handsome trophy and prize money to the connections of Traditional.

Tumbok managing editor Noel Briones was also in the awards rites, together with Inno Adamson, SVP for operations, and its quiniela president Paolo Prieto.

"That was the strategy to rally to the final 400 meters," said a beaming Ramon Hipolito, Hontanosas's trainer together who was conditioning most of the stabled horses in Hontanosas's horses.

Basquel asked for the juice at the right moment, guiding the daughter of Traditionally out of Heather Head splendidly to win with plenty to spare and bag one of the most prestigious dosage-outings of the year.

Midnight King, ridden by Val Dilema, was somewhat of a disappointment, failing to push the lead right from the get-go despite starting and beating Traditional.

The event, supported by Philracom, MCC and the Inquirer and Bandera special races, benefited the Tiffy and Cisaic charity project under project manager Greg Perez. Mirasol R. Castillo

Dumaguete, Manila nines upset foes

By Marc Anthony Reyes

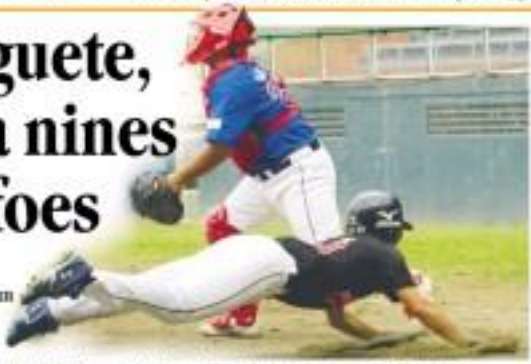
THE UNDERDOGS HAD THEIR day in the park.

Dumaguete and Manila bucked the odds and pulled off similar upset wins yesterday in the Stanford Philippines Invites 2 in the Rizal Memorial ballpark.

Hosting five runs in the first four innings, including a solo homer by Elmer del Socorro in the first frame, Dumaguete held on to nip defending champion Makati, 6-5, for its first win in four games.

National pitcher Charlie Lakwatsi struck out seven and gave up five hits in a no-relief stint while Marvin Maliq drove in two runs as Manila slapped a five-hit win on Cebu, 4-2.

Both teams have blanked Taguig, 5-0, to post its second straight victory and to Cebu for the lead with a 3-1 record.



MARKSMEN Carlo Bacuno steals to third against Forward Taguig in yesterday's game at the Rizal ballpark. NONO BURGOS

Dumaguete gained a six-with Taguig at 1-3 behind Manila, which owned to coast at 2-2.

Maliq had two RBIs in four times at bat with his single to the left field in the first inning driving home national team catcher Rommel Raja as the Sharks stormed to a 3-1 lead.

He again produced a run-scoring single in the ninth off Joseph Orillaza, who failed to get the job done after relief-saving over Jhon Kinson Summan-Ho to snag win.

He, patiently being groomed by Cebu manager Jimi Bacarisas, gave up six of the nine hits Manila banked on to score.

"It's becoming embarrassing already but the boys gave it their all today," said Dumaguete team manager Lito Delgo.

After Del Socorro's home run, Dumaguete added three more runs in the second inning with Melquin Amancio producing a run with a single before scoring on a single by national team pitcher Darwin delaCalzada.

"Slowly we are becoming comfortable playing with each other," said Delgo.

Dumaguete went on to take a 6-2 lead before Makati closed the game with three runs in the last two frames.

Tams clip Eagles for Unigames cage crown

By Gabriel P. Tupas, Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—MSU-TAWITAWI UNIVERSITY silenced Western's game with a crippling halfcourt defense in the first three quarters and finished on a 9-0 decision marred by no-letup on the team's basketball crown of the 24th Philippine University Games here.

The Tamaraws gave the Eagles no easy shots for most of the three quarters while their own scorers also were smothered on the ground, and Ted Geronimo, dished as they completed a seven-game sweep of the tournament.

"The team is improving; we were very consistent on defense," said Tamaraws coach Glen Capacio, whose squad survived West Negros College, 93-88, in the Finals 4.

The Tamaraws started to a 17-10 cushion on a Fred Ilanga triple, and Andy Ibanicus, Cumahig and Geronimo took over to keep up the Eagles at bay.

The Eagles were so out of sync in the third period that they even allowed MSU guard John Abbeo to score consecutive following a free throw from Aldrich Ramos.

By the time the Eagles found their rhythm again, the Tamaraws were beyond recall as Cumahig highlighted his 17 point effort with a triple with four minutes left, giving MSU the game's biggest lead, 56-35.

Wali Racuesta and Rirk Lung combined for 12 points in the final two minutes to set the final score.

Ambrosio dumped University of Mindanao, 89-66, for the women's basketball crown.

West Negros College salvaged third place in the men's division with a 78-67 triumph over Negros University Foundation.

The scores:

TEAMS—Cumahig 9, Ibanicus 11, Ramos 8, Ilanga 7, Dulcio 8, Abeo 6, Mining 3, Mabel 2, Rodriguez, Quilo 4, Calingin 6, Mangubat 0

AT MSU 93—Racuesta 11, Lung 11, Gabriel 8, Dumale 8, Long 7, Zamoras 6, Dano 2, Hamoralesan 2, Mabel 0, Aquino 2, Bonael 2, Amosanto 0, Lomboy 0

Quarters: 29-17, 28-13, 12-15, 25-18

Pinoys bag team trap bronze

JITTERS Dioceles, Eric Ang and Carlos Cueng (from left) show their hard-won bronze medals in team trap—the Philippines' first medal in the Asian meet.

RANGED AGAINST THE BEST SHOOTERS IN ASIA, Filipino marksmen proved they were up to the challenge, winning the bronze medal in the men's team trap event Friday in the 2007 Asian Clay Shooting Championships at the PSC-PNSA Shooting Range at the BaCon Compound in Montalupa City.

The Filipinos, homered by Olympians Arthur Dioceles, Eric Ang and National Open trap champion Carlos Cueng, shot 335 forty to place third in the event behind India (gold) and Kuwait (silver).

The Indians won with a 364 total with Manavjit Singh Sandhu securing the individual gold with 122.

Kuwait bagged the silver with 345 in the champs' one-hitter behind by the 99E, Bigeye, Nike, Coca-Cola and Renaissance Hotel, the official hotel.

Dioceles, a three-time world practical shooting champ, and Ski Gomez (who Ang shot identical 114s to get into Cueng's 117 for the Philippines' first medal.

"That's a good start going into the 26th SEAG in Thailand," said organizing committee chair Gay Cueva.

Thailand reclaimed a team score of 1,057 Sochi, Japan secured 12 1, while Malaysia snagged sixth with 1035.

Kuwait's Abdulrahman Khaled, who also took the individual silver, fired 120, while Alfalhan Abdulrahman chipping in 112 and Mesfael Nasser making 113.

India dominated the field as Asaree Sultan and Lazarus Singh Sandhu racked up identical scores of 116s behind the individual champion Singh Sandhu.

Payla just a win from ... From page A11

"I'm ready to face anyone in my class," said Payla in a supreme show of confidence. "Even today, I'm willing to fight Warren."

Payla is a southpaw like Warren but stands an inch shorter than the 5-foot-9 American. They collide on Wednesday (Thursday in Manila) with the winner bagging into the quarterfinals and earning a matchup with Ishii in Beijing.

Payla, 26, has all the reasons to feel confident. After mauling Andrew Selby of Wales in the preliminaries last Thursday, the Doha Asian Games gold medalist took the fight out of Said with his varying punches.

To the delight of the Filipino-Americans in the gallery, Payla ended the first round with a comfortable 8-3 lead. Carmen recorded a considerably 5-3 lead. Carmen recorded a considerably 8-3 lead. Carmen recorded a considerably 8-3 lead. Carmen recorded a considerably 8

Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

SPORTS

Red Sox go 3-0 vs Rockies

DENVER, COLORADO—EVERYBODY KNEW JAPANESE STAR pitcher Daisuke Matsuzaka of the Boston Red Sox could throw with typhoon force. His World Series debut, coming against the Colorado Rockies, also showed he is a samurai with a bat and has ninja-like fielding reflexes too.

Matsuzaka became the first Japanese starting pitcher to win a World Series game as the Red Sox rolled to an 8-0/3 triumph Saturday (Sunday in Manila) to take a 3-0 lead in the best-of-seven Major League baseball final.

The 27-year-old right-hander struck out five in 5 1/3 innings, allowing only three hits and no walks in 101 pitches for the victory and contributed a two-run single—his first US hit—as part of a six-run third inning.

"I thought he pitched really well," Red Sox manager Terry Francona said. "That's the best life he has had on his fastball in some time. He threw some good changeups."

Matsuzaka also won a personal battle against Justice Bella Livio teammate Kazuo Matsui of the Rockies, even though Matsui hit Matsuzaka's first pitch—a 91-mph fastball—for a single and took second base on a fielding error.

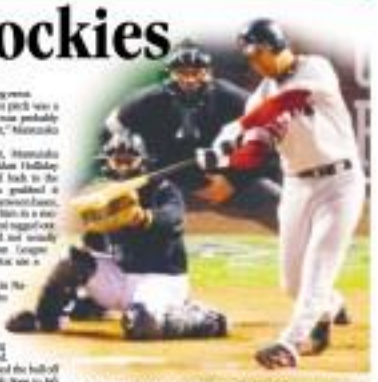
"I knew if the first pitch was a fastball that Kazuo was probably going to come after it," Matsuzaka said.

After a strikeout, Matsuzaka forced Colorado's Matt Holliday to hit a ground ball back to the mound. Matsuzaka grabbed it and caught Matsui between bases, eventually catching him in a rundown that saw Matsui tagged out.

Matsuzaka would not actually bat since Interleague Congress clubs like the Red Sox use a designated hitter.

But Series rules in National League parks require pitchers to bat, so Matsuzaka came to the plate in the third inning with the bases loaded.

Matsuzaka smashed the ball off Colorado starter Josh Fogg to left field, driving in two runs for a 5-0 Boston lead.



KNOWN more for his pitching, Boston Red Sox's Daisuke Matsuzaka (right) hurts the Rockies with his bat. AFP

Norwood just waiting for Baculi's move

By Jaimee H. Paya

THE ALLAMERICAN PHILIPPINE TEAM will turn down any late inclusion to its roster even if it means rejecting FA Am veteran Cube Norwood.

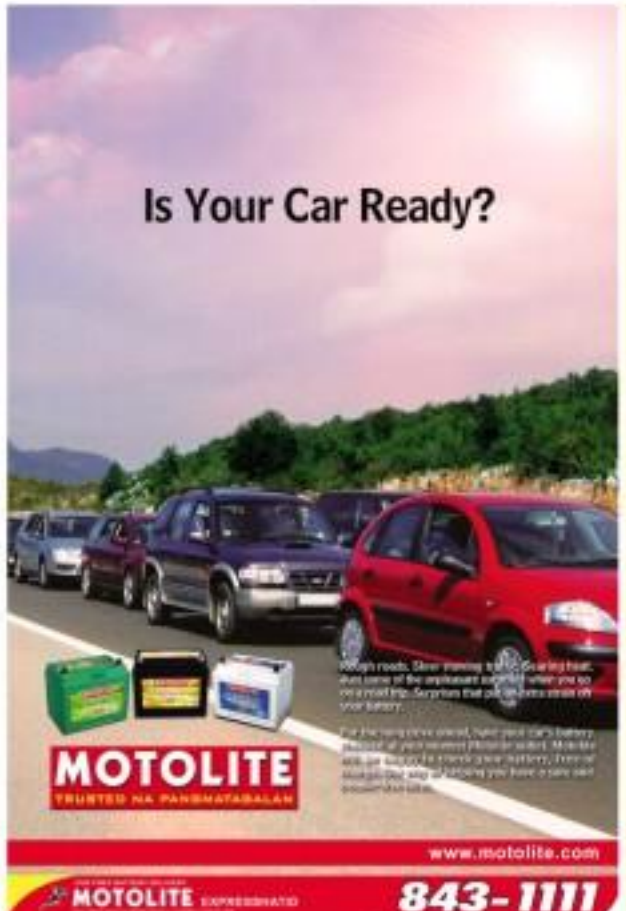
"If he joins us on the last week of Nuvera, her—and this is for any player, not just Norwood...he will have a hard time," said national coach Jimel Baculi.

But Norwood claimed the AP team has yet to officially show interest in getting him to join the Nationals although his own team, Hapee Toothpaste, had already expressed willingness to lend him to the squad preparing for the coming Southeast Asian Games.

"Since I got back, no one has contacted me from the AP team," said the 10-time ace Nuvera, who played with the national five in the Fiba tryouts/Japan last July.

The 6-foot-3 guard, though, has yet to showcase his real talent after averaging only 6.5 points in two games with Hapee.

"I'm working with what I have," said Baculi.



ROOOUPD Tacadino extinguishes Elmer Sabal in the finish line.

MILO MARATHON

Tacadino, 44, pips Sabal in Tuguegarao 21K

TUGUEGARAO CITY—WHAT'S a 44-year-old doing in a highly competitive 21-kilometer foot race against boys trying to make it to the finish line with a dookeng just right for his age?

For Rodolfo Tacadino, it's to win—and do it with aplomb.

Tacadino beat Elmer Sabal in a dramatic sprint to the gmail finish yesterday to crash the Tuguegarao qualifying race of the 31st National Milo Marathon—his 11th Milo leg championship in a checquered running career.

The veteran Ampayan timed in impressive one hour, eight minutes and three seconds and nosed five other qualifiers, including the top three women, in the national finals slated Nov. 18 in Metro Manila.

Sabal, younger brother of former national champion Clemencino Sabal and 20 years Tacadino's junior, settled for second place with a time of 1:09:05.

Tibal—and the last men's qualifier—was 26-year-old Joel Bragat, winner of last year's Ilagan leg, who clocked 1:09:28.

Topping the ladies' 21K race was first-time winner Gelyn Malong who clocked 1:26:26.

Sandy Ababan crossed the finish line 29 seconds behind Malong and took second place honors.

Joining Malong and Ababan on the national finals of the annual foot race held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel Manila, Adidas and the Department of Tourism was Lolibet Arbo Santos who timed 1:26:48.

Not done yet, Tacadino and Malong each pocketed P30,000 and received an elegant trophy from Milo.

The winners in the 5K fun run were Redel Mark Ebuan (14:09), Bajeet Bendol (14:26) and Ernesto Cunagan (14:26) in the men's division and Perlyn Bayaoyao (24:17), Sarah Jane Bajeed (29:18) and Rezza Joy Orga (24:35) in the women's division.

The Milo Marathon caps its 22-leg elimination series on Sunday in Baguio City.

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Politics seen curbing growth momentum

INQUIRER MONITOR

Services sector biggest employer (Labor Force Survey)

HSBC economist says RP fiscal reforms in peril

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE POLITICAL SCANDALS ROCKING THE PHILIPPINES COULD curb the government's fiscal reform momentum and dash hopes of any sovereign credit-rating upgrade anytime soon, an economist from British banking giant HSBC has warned.

"Recent political scandals will make it harder for the President to advance a new wave of policy reforms, especially relating to improving the underlying public sector finances," HSBC regional economist Frederic Neumann said in a commentary dated Oct. 31.

Despite a disappointing tax revenue growth, the Hong Kong-based Neumann said the government was now closing in on its full-year deficit target of P65 billion. Not excluding privatization receipts, he pointed out that the government's fiscal performance was "less impressive," suggesting that more reforms were needed.

Meanwhile expenditure pluses and dragging tax collection were likely to keep the budget in deficit for the foreseeable future, Neumann predicted.

The government has made a commitment to wipe out its budget deficits with

FOLLIES | B4

Consumer prices remain stable despite oil spike

By Norma W. Dorotan

THE SPIKE IN WORLD PRICES OF oil should not cause increases in the prices of basic goods, according to the National Price Coordinating Council.

However, Trade Undersecretary Zenaida C. Maglaya said there were other factors such as production area, seasonality, supply, supply, demand for the product and weather that could affect prices.

Still, Maglaya said producers and manufacturers "generally" assured the council that prices would remain to current levels.

Based on DTI documents, the price of chicken should generally be at about P120 a kilo, pork at P140 a kilo and fish at P80 a kilo.

"Prices of processed and manufactured commodities such as sardines, meat and instant noodles remained the same," Maglaya said, citing results of the regular market monitoring.

"We got assurance from officials of the National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc. that there would be no price increase until the Christmas season," she added, referring to the NPCC meeting held last Friday.

Maglaya added that officials of the United Broiler Raisers Association assured consumers of ample supply of chickens up to the holiday season because of buffer from their special imports.

She said a downturn in prevailing prices of vegetables was also noted compared to mid-October prices, except for the erratic price of tomatoes due to the rainy season.

As for sugar, prices are expected to ease in the next few weeks following an increase in domestic supply.

On the other hand, prices of flour went up 11.4 percent from P680 a bag in September to a range of P735 to P760.

Maglaya said the increase was due to an upsurge in the price of wheat—a major component in making flour—due to a decline in production caused by heavy rains and massive droughts in Eastern Europe and North Africa.

"The price of wheat is still high and we can see that our bakers can no longer shoulder the cost," Maglaya said.

"We're looking at increasing the volume of imports through Philippine International Trading Corp.," she said. "We will be working with importers of flour to be able to use the PITC line."

Maglaya added that the DTI would continue to strictly monitor prices of prime commodities and apprehend profiteers that would take advantage of bugbear buyers.

Subsidies to state firms hit ₱15.5B

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE NATIONAL government spent P15.53 billion in the first nine months of the year to subsidies to financially dependent state-owned firms, a 58-percent jump from only P9.25 billion in the same period a year ago.

Of the total subsidies, P4.343 billion went to government financial institutions (GFIs), while P11.19 billion was granted to government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs), the Bureau of the Treasury disclosed.

In September alone, subsidies reached P1.02 billion, 4 percent up from P977 million in the same month last year.

Subsidies are provided by the national government to state-owned firms that need extra liquidity to ensure their continued operations.

The rise in subsi-

BUSINESS | 84

CURRENCIES

OCTOBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

As of 5 p.m., Oct. 26, 2007

STOCK MARKET

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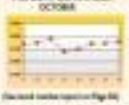
OCTOBER



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Investors to track Fed move

STOCK MARKET INVESTORS ARE poised to track possible interest rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve despite a two-day trading session this week.

The stock market is closed today for the barangay and youth council elections and on Nov. 1 and 2 for religious holidays.

The US Federal Open Market Committee is set to meet on Oct. 31 to determine the fate of its key fed funds rate.

Paul Joseph Sarmiento, chief investment officer at ING Investment Management Inc., said buying last week reflected positioning ahead of a FOMC meeting wherein investors are betting on a 25-basis point cut in the Fed rate.

Elizabeth Ramirez-Lanuza

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Splash sees 41% jump in '07 profit to ₱282M

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS firm Splash Corp. said its nine-month net sales reached P1.9 billion, bringing it closer to its full-year target of P2.9 billion, chief financial officer Noel Manuzon said.

Full-year net sales are expected to grow 36 percent, with 13 new-product launches seen to contribute 14-16 percent of that growth.

Nationally, Manuzon said the fourth quarter was a strong period for Splash, contributing P1 billion worth of net sales.

He added that the net income could go as high as P282 million this year, up 41 percent from the previous year's level.

Splash chair Rolando Hortaleza said the company was spending between P600 million and P1.2 billion for two to three possible brand acquisitions to further grow the company.

Splash plans to raise between P1.94 billion and P2.8 billion from a public offering that will start on Nov. 6. The offer period ends on Nov. 12 while the listing date is tentatively set for Nov. 13.

The offering will consist of 222.85 million shares at between P6.70 and P11.30 each.

Of the total public offer, 186.85 million will consist of new shares and 35 million shares will comprise existing stocks to be offered by Splash Holdings Inc., a 100-percent-owned investment company of Splash Group founders Rolando Hortaleza and his wife Rosalinda Ang Hortaleza.

SB Capital Investment Corp. and First Metro Investment Corp. have been tapped as the lead underwriters for the planned listing.

Established in 1995, Splash has grown from a P12,000 backyard business into a P4-billion enterprise that has established market presences in more than 20 countries in Asia, the Middle East and North America.

PSEi forecast to hit 4,200 by June 2008

ONLINE BROKER CITISECURITIES.com has raised its target for the main stock barometer, the Philippine Stock Exchange Index (PSEi), to 4,200 by June 2008 from 3,600 as higher liquidity flows and low interest rates increase investor appetites, CitiSecurities.com said in a recent briefing.

The brokerage said liquidity conditions—or the ability to convert shares into cash—have turned favorable both globally and domestically, pumped up by a 50-basis-point cut by the US Federal Reserve to August and a subsequent local interest rate cut by 25 basis points by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

CitiSecurities added that said the weak economic outlook in the US and an improving local fiscal position, both inflation and foreign flows were expected to dampen any tight easing on borrowing costs.

It said excess liquidity was also expected to flow into Asia as regional gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the next two years was expected to reach 7.5 percent, much faster than developed countries' GDP growth of below 3 percent.

In the Philippines, the government expects GDP growth to reach 6.7-8 percent in 2008 and 7.4 percent in 2009, driven by higher government spending, rising investments and consumer spending.

CitiSecurities also said that a slowdown in the US economy would have a small impact on the Philippines since exports to the US now account for 17 percent of total exports, down from a high of 40 percent in 1992.

A US slowdown would, however, impact more on remittances from overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) since remittances from the US account for around half of total remittances in the country. Still, the overall impact on consumer spending won't be substantial. This is given that OFW remittances from the US account for only around 7.9 percent of total consumer spending," CitiSecurities said.

The broker also said that improving employment outlook locally, driven by the strong demand from the business process outsourcing sector, rising investments and the increasing availability of cheap and affordable credit, should continue to fuel solid consumer spending.

However, CitiSecurities cited risks to stock target such as rising commodity prices for food and oil, monetary policy tightening and "any other negative" event it outsider" similar to the US subprime market problem.

Rising inflation could prompt monetary authorities to raise interest rates, which will negatively impact on market liquidity.

"Nevertheless, Asian economies are less vulnerable to rising commodity prices given their strong currencies relative to the US dollar," the broker said.

Monetary tightening is also highly unlikely due to low inflation and a strong peso and a slowing US economy, Khaleed Sanchez-Lacson

Maybank

Exchange

Indicator for 2007 Country	Unit	Spot Exchange	Buying Exchange	Selling Exchange
United States	Dollar	0.02437	0.02412	0.02437
Japan	Yen	0.00219	0.00192	0.00219
United Kingdom	Pound	1.47887	1.47887	1.47887
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.19008	0.19008	0.19008
Switzerland	Franc	0.02884	0.02884	0.02884
Canada	Dollar	0.02439	0.02439	0.02439
Singapore	Dollar	0.03761	0.03761	0.03761
Australia	Dollar	0.02803	0.02803	0.02803
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.00639	0.00639	0.00639
Brunei	Dollar	0.03761	0.03761	0.03761
Thailand	Baht	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
European Union	Euro	0.01687	0.01687	0.01687
China	Yuan	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Korea	Won	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
India	Rupee	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Taiwan	Dollar	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Vietnam	Dong	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Macau	Pataca	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Laos	Kip	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
New Zealand	Dollar	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Sweden	Krona	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Mexico	Peso	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000

Source: Bankers Association of the Philippines, Inc. (BAP)
*Indicates that a decline is quoted in Bankers' Terms ** Rate that is only valid on May 31, 2007

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DLSU-Dasmariñas reaps laurels

De La Salle University-Dasmariñas ranked first in the 'B-21 Examinees category of the October 2007 CPA Licensure Examinations with 110 out of 111 Batch 2007 graduates passing the board exams, consequently getting a 91 percent school passing rate. The statistical passing rate is 57 percent.

Nine certified public accountants (cpa) Karla Dianne Villafuerte Bajo, Katherine Mae Sison Bacsa, Christy Ann Rabajo Constantino, Rhuff Joel Franco Digma, Gladel Nicolasora Hipolito, Mary Ann Villanueva Lopez, Jane Jade De Medinilla, Rose Guillem Castillo Madrazo, Nivie Grace Abino Sanqui, and Nanoh Servido Lucero.

Meanwhile, DLSU-D ranked 9th in the 9th Inter-Collegiate Finance Competition – the country's most prestigious competition in the field of finance. The DLSU-D Finance Team is composed of Lala Amon, Edgelyn Jovero, John Rey Millora, Jane Mary Bajo and Mary Joy Morales. CBA faculty members Jess Abadilla-on, Tobie Cabrera, and Alice Valerio acted as coaches.

The DLSU-D Finance team automatically qualified in the all-expense paid Citibank Readers' Congress. The other schools that landed on the top five are Ateneo De Manila University, UP-Diliman, Singapore Management University, and UP-Iloilo.

DLSU-D creating possibilities

RP, US sign accord to boost Subic, Maryland ecozone trade

Agreement a significant inroad for Subic freeport

By Bonna Wi Dumlao

OFFICIALS FROM THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY in the United States have signed a memorandum of understanding with a US local government aimed at expanding investment, trade and investment flows between Subic and a Maryland economic zone.

Armand C. Arreza, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority administrator, said in a statement that the MOU signed last Oct. 22 was meant to enhance bonds of cooperation between Subic and Prince George's County, Maryland's foreign trade zone.

"This opens up a huge window of opportunity for Subic, and we would like to explore all the possibilities that this new partnership offers," Arreza said.

The official added that the agreement was a significant inroad for the Subic freeport as the SBMA enlisted its cooperation links in global trade and sought more foreign direct investments.

He said the signatories of the MOU included Philippine Ambassador Willy C. Gaa, Prince George's County Executive Jack B. Johnson and David M. Valderrama, president of the International Council of Asian-American Business Interests.

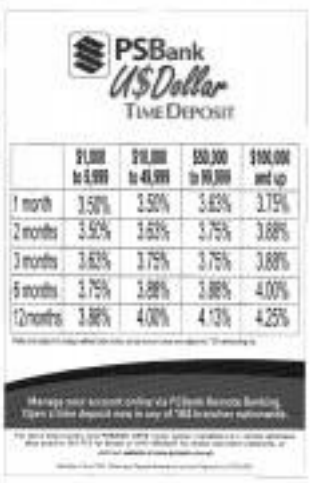
"This is aimed at facilitating the sharing of experiences and best practices between the two trade zones, improve the quality of operations and logistical efficiency of companies located in both zones, and link the Port of Subic with Maryland's Port of Baltimore," Arreza said.

He added that the exchange of trade information and best practices would be invaluable to Subic because Maryland hosts four trade zones and the Baltimore port, a major center of maritime commerce in the United States.

"Subic has been a military port for over a century and it is only now that its potentials for trade are being realized," Arreza said. "As a commercial port, Subic could learn a lot from Baltimore, which has over 200 years of experience in cargo handling."

In an effort to develop Subic into a regional logistics and service hub, SBMA has ramped up the freeport's cargo-handling capacity to 600,000 seventy foot-equivalent units and has been wooing investments in terminal operations, drydocking and ship repair, shipbuilding and warehousing.

For its part, the Port of Baltimore—with six public terminals and 30 private terminals stretched over a 45-mile shoreline—is considered the top-ranking port on the US East Coast in terms of roll-on roll-off cargo operations.



GMA ready for mobile TV competition

Network sets aside P200 million to study, test digital television

By Rica T. Chikiamco

GMA NETWORK SAID IT WAS NOT threatened by telecommunications companies offering mobile TV, saying it was ready to compete if regulators blur the line between telecommunications and broadcasting.

"The issue is not competition. The issue is fraud," GMA president and CEO Felipe Gozon said in a briefing last week.

"The mobile phone is like a TV set. It can read the same programs that the TV can. But the urban laws on broadcasting authority under their franchise. Telecommunications is not. It is for voice and data. It is not for broadcasting or entertainment. So the NTC (National Telecommunications Commission) is now hard-put to place this territory among the holders of portable that they have issued. If mobile TV might not be worth our time and effort," he said.

Then again, he might be.

Gozon acknowledged that the mobile TV market cannot be ignored. 40 tor all, there are far more handsets in the hands of consumers than there are TV sets in their homes.

Of the estimated 15.6 million Philippine households, 9.6 million have TV sets, according to the National Population Census 2000.

In contrast, a total of 26 million GSM subscribers are expected to be registered by year-end by Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc., both of whom have ventured into mobile TV.

How many of these GSM subscribers will actually switch to 3G and watch mobile TV is another story, but GMA Network is not taking any chances.

GMA executive vice president and COO Gilberto Duavit Jr. said the network has set aside P200 million to study digital TV and undertake tests, for which a contract has been awarded.

Mobile TV is not so revolutionary the broadcast industry because it delivers content, focusing on sports, news, movies and shows.

This could do away with programming for "prime time," the time slot traditionally ranging from 6:00 p.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Digital programming also allows broadcast companies to create six high-quality multimedia streams to one 6MHz bandwidth.

In sending programming, GMA can only broadcast "Matinee" to the 8:30 to 9 p.m. weeknight time slot. Digitally, GMA can add live digital programming, sports, technology, education, travel and movies to the same time slot.

"If that happens, we can continue late evening content to partners for we can also broadcast directly to the devices that we are owned," Gozon said in Filipino.

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE
Residents of Barangay Libis in Philippston, Sarangani province rush across the river from their homes to secure dry rooftops to escape the rising waters of the Liki bankbridge. The bankbridge was built by LEARN's Grassroots Equity in Mindanao (GEM) Program in partnership with the municipal government of Malapatan.

Meralco cuts system losses

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LOPEZ-LED MANILA ELECTRIC CO. (Meralco) certain losses to only 9.12 percent in the third quarter, below the 9.5 percent cap set by the Energy Regulatory Commission.

A low system loss is beneficial to distribution utilities such as Meralco, as every time they go beyond the 9.5-percent cap, they have to absorb a loss because the excess can no longer be passed on to electricity consumers.

System losses refl ect the 9.5-percent cap can still be charged to customers as part of their monthly electricity bills.

Meralco attributed its improved third quarter system loss, which was 9.72 percentage points lower than the 9.84 percent posted in the same period last year, to its aggressive campaign against electricity pilferage and the increased share of privately metered sales in the overall sales mix.

"The campaign against illegal connections and pilferage led to the apprehension of 7,090 registered meters and the arrest of 24 persons involved in the illegal activity. This effort resulted in the recovery of P397 million from persons made by the violators for their previously stabilized consumption," the distribution utility said.

"The recovered amounts from the persons were returned as discounts to the previous charges of Meralco customers. In the third quarter, the customer savings was 2.6 centavos per kilowatt hour (kWh)," it added.

To further boost its campaign against power pilferers, Meralco inked separate agreements with the city governments of Manila, Pasay and Quezon on July 20, Aug. 29 and Oct. 26, respectively.

Apart from its intensified efforts against illegal connections, Meralco also attributed its improved third quarter system loss to the increase in the share of primary-metered sales to 29.67 percent from 29.41 percent to the same period the year before.

Meralco emphasized that energy sales from higher service voltages had lower inherent losses compared to the same energy sales at the lower service voltages.

The company's energy sales mix is dominated by residential sales, followed by commercial, industrial and streetlights.

For the first nine months, Meralco's system loss rate stood at 10.82 percent. The 12-month moving average, on the other hand, was pegged at 9.79 percent.

DA calls for more investments in ingredients industry

By Lucy R. Flores

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULture has urged the private sector to invest more in the booming natural ingredient industry.

According to Alice G. Iñigo, head of the Department of Agriculture's Biotechnology Program Office, only a few firms have put their money in this industry estimated to be worth at least $1 billion worldwide, or P46 billion.

"The DA-BPO is currently encouraging more investments in the cultivation of mulungay, sambong, lemon, ginger, mangosteen, cholesterol, lemongrass, turmeric, cardamom, among others which could be developed to meet global demand for natural ingredients.

"If we want to satisfy the local requirements in mulungay, we need as much as 500,000 hectares. Right now, we barely come close to [supplying] 1000 hectares alone," she said.

Iñigo said the demand for natural ingredients was growing because of the consumers growing preference for nutrition food and organic products.

"Unfortunately, the Philippines has yet to tap the $1-billion world market for natural ingredients, as of now our market share is probably very insignificant, at less than one percent," she explained.

To speed up the development of the local industry, Iñigo said the DA-BPO planned to put up different research stations across the country.

She explained that these stations will focus on the research and propagation of certain indigenous plants.

Iñigo also recommended the establishment of standards and benchmarks to ensure that all raw materials derived from plants would be accepted by the world market.

For this reason, Iñigo said the DA-BPO has been asking for more funds to be used in clinical trials, facilities and further studies.

Politics ... Analysis

Seeds of a 'bayanihan' economy

No Free Lunch
Carlito S. Rafides

A RECENT GATHERING OF PEOPLE sensitives from 26 countries held at the JP Dilmun campus brought together people unhappy with the way their respective economies, and the global economy as a whole, have perpetuated ever-widening disparities within and among countries.

The Asian Forum for Solidarity Economy drew hundreds of people from various walks of life, all sharing a desire to find an alternative economic order to the one we have where a few typically reap benefits at the expense of many others.

As the name suggests, the economy they seek is one where all players work together toward a shared goal of uplifting the lives of all...that is, an economy built on solidarity rather than on competition and conflict.

Inherent conflict

The problem is, conflict and tension are inherent in the market economy as we know it.

Consumers want to pay as low a price as possible for the goods and services they buy, but producers and sellers want to charge as high a price as possible for the same goods and services. Workers want to receive as high a wage as possible from employers. On the other hand, employers are out to pay as low wages as possible to the workers they hire.

The investor wants to pay as low interest as possible on the loans they obtain from their creditors, but the latter want to charge as high interest as possible. This basic conflict of interest is seen many times over among the players in the various kinds of transactions made in any market economy day after day.

The modern economy, it seems, is built on such conflicting motives among its various players.

Invisible hand

In Adam Smith, considered the father of modern economics, such inherent conflict is natural and necessary. He once postulated that the combined actions of all players in the economy, acting on the basis of each one's self-interest, given rise to an "invisible hand" that yields efficient outcomes.

For as long as there are large enough numbers of such players and there is free competition among them, market forces will automatically yield the right allocation of the economy's resources, and the goods and services they produce.

But does "right" allocation here mean a fair or equitable allocation? Not, unfortunately, in where Smith's "invisible hand" rule.

In the direct conflict of motives between buyers and sellers, workers and employers, and debtors and creditors, there is rarely a balance of power between the contending sides, and one side or the other is bound to get the proverbial shorter end of the stick.

In everyday transactions within a competitive economy, there are bound to be winners and losers, winners are not the rule, but the exception.

Social responsibility

Solidarity economy advocates believe that such outcome need not be inevitable, along with our basic instinct for pursuing self interest, human beings also possess an instinct for altruism, that is, for caring and sharing. This sense is manifested in the roles the family and local communities play in human behaviors that may not necessarily promote our own best self-interest all the time.

This instinct comes into play, for example, when a banker or financier chooses to extend credit to smaller, struggling enterprises when dealing with bigger, but bigger borrowers would appear to be more profitable.

Or an investor deliberately chooses to put funds into a socially responsible enterprise over another that is clearly more lucrative but with possibly adverse social or environmental impacts. Or an entrepreneur opts to forego maximizing profits in favor of paying wider benefits for the firm's workers or customers.

The recent Asian Forum showcased, through exhibits and presentations, real-world models of socially responsible finance, socially responsible investments and socially responsible enterprises, both here and abroad.

In so doing, the forum demonstrated that a more caring economy is indeed possible, while sowing the seeds of a movement that would propagate the ideals of an economy that exemplifies the Filipino concept of *bayanihan*, which aptly captures the very concept of the solidarity economy.

'Bayanihan' products

Prominent Philippine names included the recently established Bayanihan Banking Windows, a partnership between Rizcom Bank and the GAWAD Inc., which provides a venue for caring investors to deliberately make their funds available to fi nancially challenged but responsible enterprises.

Also featured were a range of fair products the Bayanihan Food Deli, an inexpensive package composed of ready-to-cook meat, vegetables and rice designed to feed a typical poor family for up to two meals.

The response is able to keep the food park charge by cutting though the middlemen and getting supplies directly from farm producers, and restaurant supplying low-income communities around the country with decent meals that are both nutritious and affordable.

The movement for a solidarity economy has already taken root in North America and Latin America, as attested by forum participants from those regions.

The recent Asian Forum planted the seeds for a similar movement in the Philippines and the rest of Asia, and culminated in pledges of commitment from numerous stakeholders in the finance, enterprise, academe and media sectors to help in spreading and nurturing the seeds of what would be better described as the Philippines as a Bayanihan Economy.

Comments welcome at charlito@gmail.com.ph.

Subsidies to state firms hit P15.5B

From page B1

due to GOCCs and GFIs defeated the goal set by authorities to reduce the financial dependence of state-owned firms on the national government, which is trying to put its own financial house in order.

The DOF had wanted to reduce the subsidies granted to state-owned firms to force them to become less dependent on the national government. But the DOF had said that the increase in subsidies could not be avoided because of the implementation of more social-welfare programs by the state-owned firms that needed additional funding.

The DOF-online cited the conduct of additional livelihood programs of the Technical Resource and Livelihood Center and the increase in housing projects of the National Housing Authority as some of the reasons for the increase in subsidies.

The DOF also noted that spending for the government's unproductive agencies, often pegged as CARD also formed part of the subsidies. Although the total of state-owned firms for subsidies increased, the DOF noted that they have been contributing to state coffers in the form of dividends remitted to the national government. The DOF earlier reported that GOCCs and GFIs remitted a combined P6.66 billion in dividends in the first nine months.

The DOF said it has intensified its auditing of the financial statements of GOCCs and GFIs to help ensure that they remit accurate amounts of dividends. Many-owned firms are mandated to give at least 50 percent of their net income to the national government.

Export of coco products bounced back in Sept.

Coconut oil drove up shipments by 14.5% to 153,170 MT

By Amy R. Remo

EXPORTS OF MAJOR COCONUT PRODUCTS bounced back in September this year, growing by 14.5 percent from the same month of the previous year, according to the United Coconut Associations of the Philippines (Ucap).

A total of 153,170 metric tons in copra terms were shipped out that month.

Ucap's preliminary data showed that in September 2006, exports had reached 133,820 metric tons.

Last month's shipment were also higher by 6.4 percent, compared to August exports, which had reached 146,731 MT.

Despite rising to Ucap, the increase could be safely ascribed to coconut oil, exports of which rose by 109 percent to 78,328 MT from the 40,146 MT recorded in the same period last year.

Exports of other coconut products however slumped.

Ave copra meal, export volume plunged by 40 percent to 24,220 MT from 40,536 MT, dessicated coconut delivery fell by 11.7 percent to 39,047 MT from 11,257 MT, while oleochemicals as copra exports slid by 16.7 percent to 13,306 MT from 15,978 MT.

Initial Ucap figures showed that Europe was last month's top destination, with shipments totalling 27,300 MT. This represented 47.9 percent of total sales.

The US meanwhile imported 30,536 MT, accounting for 39 percent of total sales.

Other importers were Japan, which imported 5,202 MT (9.6 percent share); Malaysia with 3,000 MT (5.8 percent); and China with 2,400 MT (3.4 percent).

Exports of copra meal were almost equally split between Korea, with shipments amounting to 12,300 MT, and Vietnam, with 11,920 MT.

From January to September, exports had reached a total of 1.16 million MT in copra terms, which is 25.2 percent lower than the 1.55 million MT recorded in the same period last year.

As of September this year Ucap said around 4.6 million had reached 5,022,845, down 20.4 percent from last year's 6,311,130 MT; copra meal at 262,049 MT, down 20.4 percent from 329,000 MT; dessicated coconut at 96,211 MT, down 7.7 percent from 104,245 MT; and, oleochemicals as copra at 80,739 MT, down 4.1 percent from 84,633 MT.

In 2006, total coconut exports reached 2.01 million MT in copra terms, down 5 percent from the previous year's 2.14 million MT.

That year, coconut oil was the lead export product at 1.07 million MT, followed by copra meal at 929,960 MT.

As for local production, Ucap earlier said that total coconut output is expected to slide by 6.0 percent in 2007 to 2.24 million MT in copra terms, as the industry is still reeling from the adverse effects of storms that had hit the country in the last semester of 2006.

The Philippine Coconut Authority has projected an even lower production of 2.17 million MT, a 10-percent decline from last year's level.

In 2006, coconut production reached 2.47 million metric tons in copra terms, down from the previous year's 2.65 million metric tons.

According to data from the PCA, about 42 million coconut trees were damaged by Typhoon "Reming" alone, which ravaged southern Luzon in late November.

However, PCA administrator Oscar Garin said he expects coconut production to rise to 2.4 million metric tons in 2008, all the way up to 3 million metric tons in 2010.

He said the increase would be brought on partly by the P100-million intercrop pilot program the agency had implemented in the first half of the year.

Metrobank links up with US remittance firm

Regulator appoints seventh wholesale aggregator

By Doris C. Dumlao

METROPOLITAN BANK AND Trust Co. has tied up with San Francisco-based money transfer company Xoom Corp. to provide overseas Filipinos an option in remitting money to beneficiaries through the Internet.

In a press statement last Friday, Metrobank and Xoom announced their partnership in the latter's bank deposits to the Philippines.

"We are always looking at how we can extend our services to our overseas Filipino workers," said Metrobank Executive Vice President Carmelita Asuncion. "This partnership will benefit Filipinos particularly in the United States, Europe, Middle East, Singapore and Japan, who can easily send money to their beneficiaries for as long as they have a Metrobank deposit account."

With a click of a button, Xoom customers can deposit money in any Metrobank account, and the money will be available to the recipient in a few hours by logging on to www.xoom.com. money can be sent to existing Metrobank deposition to the Philippines.

Remittances can be limited using a bank account, credit card, debit card or PayPal, a web-based account that serves as an electronic alternative to traditional modes such as checks and money orders.

"Serving Filipino remittance is very important to Xoom," said John Kunz, president and CEO of Xoom. "Our partnership with Metrobank will enable us to provide much faster deposits to Metrobank accounts and greater convenience to both senders and receivers."

Metrobank is the Philippines' largest bank, with consolidated assets of P668.3 billion as of June 30, 2007. It is the flagship company of the Metrobank Group, which has a network of over 800 domestic and international offices, operating in 14 countries.

Xoom Corp. was founded in 2001 in San Francisco and is backed by leading venture firms-Sequoia Capital, New Enterprise Associates and Shilitz Ventures.

BIR urged to release Pall Mall stock in the market

By Michelle V. Remo

LA SUERTE CIGAR & Cigarette Factory is pressing the Bureau of Internal Revenue to allow the release of Pall Mall cigarettes from its production facility.

The tobacco firm has expressed its concern over the brand's dwindling presence in the market.

Lachasers to the local pursue of British American Tobacco (BAT) in the provision and distribution of Pall Mall cigarettes.

The BIR refuses to release the stock of Pall Mall cigarettes from the factory due to the unresolved tax issue involving the brand.

Under the country's tax laws, excise tax on cigarettes and other carried products should be paid before these could be released from production facilities.

The BIR earlier ruled that the brand should be charged a tax rate of P28 per pack.

But the Department of Finance, the BIR's mother agency, overturned the ruling and said the applicable tax rate was only P6.74 per pack.

The DOF's decision effectively prevents those competing cigarette makers, including Philip Morris and Fortune Tobacco.

The competitors said that, since Pall Mall would be imported by duty-free shops, the brand should be charged the higher excise tax rate.

They stressed that, under the law, tax on cigarettes and other carried products should be paid before these could be released from production facilities.

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La Suerte and BAT stressed that there was no documented misclassification because the BIR's ruling was never implemented in the first place, leaving boxes inadvertently contraindicated by the DOF.

La Suerte and BAT stressed that locally manufactured Pall Mall was introduced to the market prior to implementation by duty-free shops.

The excise tax rate should therefore not be based on imported rates.

The two added that importation of Pall Mall had ended last year.

Following the submission of appeals by the competition, the DOF has subjected Pall Mall taxation under review. The DOF is currently gathering legal opinions on the matter.

PSBank
PHILIPPINE SAVINGS BANK
Metrobank Group

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of September 30, 2007

ASSETS — AMOUNT

LIABILITIES

Stockholders' Equity

CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Board of Directors
Jose T. Pardo (Chairman)
Antonio V. Viray (Vice Chairman)
Arthur V. Ty (Vice Chairman)
Jose G. Aquino
Atty. Teresita G. Bautista
Benjamin T. Chan
Edwin C. Chua
Francisco M. Gonzalez II
Antonio P. Jacinto II
Regis V. Puno
Maria Victoria P. Rebuenaturo
Principal Officers
Francisco M. Gonzalez II
President
Francisco A. Gonzalez
Executive Vice President
Jaime U. Ascalon
Senior Vice President
Jose G. Serrano
Senior Vice President

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
CITY OF MAKATI) S. S.

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on this ____ day of October 2007 before me, a Notary Public for and in the City of Makati, Philippines, personally appeared the following persons who executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged that the same is their free act and deed:

Name — Competent Evidence of Identity — Date and Place Issued
FRANCISCO M. GONZALEZ II — Passport No. ____ — ____
JOSE G. SERRANO — Passport No. ____ — ____

This instrument refers to a Consolidated Statement of Condition consisting of one (1) page, including this page, and signed by the parties and their instrumental witnesses on the left margin hereof.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL on the date and place first above written.

Doc. No. ____
Page No. ____
Series of 2007

Notary Public
Until December 31, 2008
PTR No. ____ Makati
IBP No. ____ Makati
Roll No. ____
City of Makati

Competition among banks still tough, study shows

Despite M&As, level of market concentration relatively low

By Doris C. Dumlao

COMPETITION AMONG PHILIPpine banks remains stiff despite the decline in the number of players as a result of big mergers and acquisitions, a Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas study indicated.

In its latest report on the financial system submitted to Monetary Board Governor Rafael Buenaventura and Congress, the BSP said it had conducted a study on the competitive structure of the domestic universal and commercial banking industry to assess the likely impact of recent bank mergers on the industry.

"The study revealed that the level of current market concentration in the universal/commercial banking system is still relatively low, both in terms of loans and deposits, thereby indicating a generally competitive market," the BSP said.

The central bank's report was based on developments in the first semester, during which the landmark merger between Equitable-PCI Bank and Banco de Oro Universal Bank was consummated.

Prior to this deal, other big mergers were completed, such as those between Bank of the Philippine Islands and Development Bank, and Union Bank of the Philippines and International Exchange Bank.

The BSP said the overall bank structure in the country was enhanced by 13 operating banks to 958 as of end-June from 971 a year ago.

"The changing banking landscape driven by the growing emphasis on efficiency, financial stability and large investment outlays required for new technologies prompted banks opening for larger market size, better competitive advantage, higher profit and overall strategic footing in consolidation," the BSP said.

The report said the banking system was in a much better position to face the challenges of a rapidly changing global financial environment.

The BSP admitted that the overall performance for the first semester may be modest compared to international standards but noted that it still surpassed the notable improvement in banks' balance sheets on account of conducive asset choices and good capital build-up.

"Profitability indicators were impressive during the semester in terms of bottom-line and highly indicative of banks' efficient intermediation of potential revenue streams," the report said.

During the review period, the BSP said there were 36 operating universal and commercial banks with 4,259 branches, 85 thrift banks with 1,316 branches and 707 rural and cooperative banks with 1,371 branches as end-June 2007.

The BSP said the banking system's capitalization remained well above its requirement of 10 percent and the international standard of 8 percent on account of increased capital-raising activities of banks as part of their preparations for the Basle 2 capital-adequacy requirement.

Core earnings in the first semester remained strong, the BSP reported, as net interest at net tax rose by 17.6 percent to P52.8 billion from 14.8 percent in the same period last year.

Nissan seen boosting RP, India operations

By Ronnel W. Domingo

OPPAMA CITY, JAPAN—AUTO maker Nissan is ramping up its Philippine facilities amid a global thrust to build vehicles aimed at lower-income markets in Asia and rest of the world, company officials said.

Andy Palmer, Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. corporate vice president, said in an interview that the firm's successful programs in the Philippines was being tried out in other parts of the world, especially as it attempts to rebuild its light commercial vehicle business.

"In 2002, we were almost out of the LCV business and [since then] we have been working to rebuild our business globally," said Palmer, who is responsible for Nissan's LCV business unit.

"We want to go younger in some countries that we are not strong enough. In Asia, we have to use cubic India and other growing markets like the Philippines," he added.

Palmer said Nissan was developing new vehicles, like the NV 200 van, which if and when it comes into fruition would most likely end up in the Philippines, he added.

"We are currently working with Elizabeth Lee [General Motors Corp. executive vice president] in the Philippines and also with our affiliate in Thailand to set up a proper business unit structure for LCVs in Asean," Palmer said.

GMC, one of Nissan's rare Philippine units, is focused on pick-ups and vans while Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. is into the assembly of passenger cars.

"[Our Asean plans represent] a clear intent to do more than what we are doing now both in the production and marketing aspects," Palmer said.

The Tokyo-based official of GMC's marketing approach of positioning the Urvan as a multipurpose vehicle that middle-income buyers, like the families of overseas Filipino workers, could use for small businesses.

"We are exploiting globally what [we] has been doing in the Philippines and GMC is a kind of benchmark," Palmer said.

Palmer said he was keeping tabs on the Philippine economy citing that, with a population of 90 million people and its recent economic growth of about 7 percent, possessed a big market potential.

"Usually, when the economy is growing at that rate, people are buying more LUVs which you need to make money," he said.

In a separate interview, Colin Dodge, Nissan senior vice president for global overseas markets, said Nissan's production plants in Laguna have "a very bright prospect."

"We intend to develop the competitiveness of [the Philippine] plants from good to very, very good," Dodge said. "The Philippines is today one of our LUV manufacturing bases in the world."

AGRICULTURE Secretary Arthur Yap injects "Aratera" (pesticide) into a coconut tree as its trunk-efforts of the department to combat coconut pests and control the spread of the coconut leaf beetle (scientifically known as Brontispa longissima gestro) in one of the barangays in Pangbo, Bohol. The department said the proper inoculation procedure would address the problem in infested cities and municipalities where coconut trees.

Banks' bad loans up slightly in Aug.

THE BANKS' BAD LOANS-TO-TOTAL LOANS ratio inched up to 5.26 percent in August from the year-Asian crisis-low of 5.13 percent in July, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

The BSP said this was due to the decline in the sector's total loan portfolio.

The sector's nonperforming loans (NPL) increased by 0.87 percent over a month ago to hit P133.29 billion in August while its total loan portfolio showed a decline by 1.43 percent to P1.076 trillion.

The NPL ratio in August showed an improvement from the 7.2 percent in the same month last year. It is also close to the average of 3.4 percent seen before the Asian currency crisis of 1997.

The commercial banking system's stock of bad loans peaked, in terms of its ratio to total loans, at 18.81 percent in October 2001 as many corporate borrowers defaulted on their debts while banks turned cautious in providing new loans.

In the meantime, the sector's real and other properties acquired (Rpa) went up to 3.39 percent of gross assets from the previous month's ratio of 3.36 percent. The total amount of Rpas was placed at P150.643 billion.

The sector's nonperforming assets—NPLs and Rpas combined—rose to 8.7 percent from 8.63 percent in previous month. It was down from 7.82 percent in the same period last year.

Banks are supposed to unload unsecured loans in bulk to the coming months as the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) Law would expire in April next year. Boris C. Dumlao

Nissan seen boosting RP, India operations

By Ronnel W. Domingo

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Corporate Roundup

Meralco nets P2.8B in 9 months

MANILA ELECTRIC CO. POSTED A NET INCOME OF P480 MILlion in the third quarter, bounding profits in the first nine months to P2.8 billion.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Meralco said its third-quarter net income was 137 percent higher than the P208 million it earned in the same period last year. The nine-month profit this year was 370 percent higher than year-ago level.

Revenue rose 15.5 percent to P103.09 billion in the first nine months. Of the amount, Meralco said P8.75 billion had yet to be billed to customers.

In the third quarter, Meralco registered volume sales of 6,502 gigawatt hours (GWh), 8 percent higher than year-ago level. Abs-cbn/T. Ubs

Smart's 'Coastline Roaming'

SMART COMMUNICATIONS INC. HAS TIED UP WITH FOREIGN telecom firms to offer mobile roaming connectivity on board cruise ships and luxury ferries worldwide.

The service, called Coastline Roaming, allows postpaid subscribers of local subscribers to send and receive calls and text messages on selected cruise ships and ferries without having to change their phone numbers or handsets.

In a statement, Smart said it was the first Philippine telco to offer this service. Its foreign partners for the service are AT&T (Cingular) of the United States, Telecom Italia, Italy, and Mobile Maritime, Isle of Man and Maritime Communications Partner (MCP), Norway. OceanSat of Iceland is another upcoming partner.

Services using coastline roaming follow the same billing principles as regular land-based roaming. Erica T. Ch/Abs-cbnnews

ATSC ferry unit gets P28M

INTER-ISLAND FERRY SUPPORT FACILITIES CORP. IS SET TO get a capital infusion of P28 million from parent firm Middle Transport Holdings Corp. through a sale of shares.

ATSC's board has approved the subscription to an additional 140,000 common shares of IFFC. The acquisition will increase its ownership of IFFC from 20,000 to 160,000 common shares.

Last month, ATSC bought IFFC for P13.7 million from its affiliate Accorts.

"The acquisition is part of our strategy of integrating all the Abacha interests in the transport and logistics industry under ATS. The consolidation of the transport and logistics assets is to enhance the synergy of the group," ATSC earlier said. Erica T. Ch/abs-cbnnews

DA eyes partnership with Del Monte

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IS in talks with Del Monte Philippines for a possible partnership for the supply of cacao meat to the DA's Bagsakan centers and barangay food terminals in Metro Manila.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said the DA was asking the company to supply these retail outlets premium cut meat products.

Bagsakan centers and BFTs sell basic food items—including rice, meat and vegetables—at prices about 12 percent lower than their regular retail prices.

Del Monte has expressed support for the DA's campaign to bring agricultural products from the provinces, particularly in Mindanao, directly to markets in Metro Manila.

According to Del Monte plantation manager Ramon Arcanillo, Del Monte is now studying the terms of the arrangement and its costing, considering that it imports its seeds.

"The initial plan is to supply a minimum of four tons of cacao a week to selected Bagsakan centers and BFTs," Arcanillo said.

According to Arcanillo, Del Monte is shipping to Manila about 400 heads of live cattle a month.

Under the proposed tie-up, both parties have agreed to have the meat carcass packed and shipped via refrigerated vans and cold-chain facilities.

Yap said he believed that this partnership with Del Monte would help bring down the prices of meat products in Mega and Metro Manila.

Bagsakan centers and BFTs provide farmers with direct access or link to wet markets and consumers, and would help farmers earn more.

This link could eliminate unnecessary trading layers that jack up prices of agricultural products and cut profits of small farmers and fisherfolk.

The DA has been putting up these centers to strategic locations across the country to help address the pressing problems on hunger and poverty.

Yap said BFTs had been set up in Quezon City, Marikina, Taguig, Pasay City, Malabon and Caloocan.

Bagsakan centers have been established in Valenzuela, Quezon City, Marikina, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Cavite and Manila. Amy R. Rivera

Brittany earmarks P1.2B for 2nd condo project

INSPIRED BY THE SUCCESS OF MONTE, a designer condo launched late last year, real estate developer Belcorp Corp. adds a second development in Makati worth about P1.2 billion to its portfolio.

In joint ventures with the Ridrez-Ledesma family, Brittany launches St. Monic, a high-rise residential condominium that will marry art and architecture in each vertical living.

Victor Lord president and CEO Jing Sioson said the warm market reception to Brittany's first project prompted the company to start St. Monic. The company, Sioson said, takes the new project on a higher creative plane as shown in its collaboration with the Ridrez-Ledesmas.

The 32-storey residential condominium set to be completed in 2012 will house a gallery that residents and art patrons can enjoy. The gallery will occupy two levels and will exhibit the new and priceless Ridrez-Ledesma art collection. It will also showcase the works of today's young and promising artists.

As with Brittany's creative "lifestages" like Peninsula, CrossWinds and Georgia Club, St. Monic is a fusion of ideas coming from the best disciplines in the industry.

It sits across Legaspi Park, in despite being surrounded by bustling urbanity, remains secluded in the center. The iconic balcony it is also conveniently located at the heart of Makati's shopping and business district.

Inside St. Monic, spaces are designed to let an resident freely. It is also replete with exceptional amenities to satisfy the needs and wants of unit owners, from expats and investors to small families and young urban professionals.

Two firms seeking CNG accreditation

By Abigail L. Ho

TWO FOREIGN INVESTORS BACKED groups are seeking accreditation from the Department of Energy to put up facilities that will offer compressed natural gas (CNG) to motorists.

Mauro Marasigan, energy utilization and management director of the DOE, said Synergy International Resources Group Co. Ltd. and Cathedral LCNG Fuels Corp. had pending applications for accreditation.

"Their applications are still being processed. We still have to see their plans and their finances. We've asked for all the necessary documents from them so that we can properly evaluate them," he said.

The Shell Companies in the Philippines last week started the commercial run of its "ancillary" CNG station in Batangas. Batangas gas and its "daughter" CNG refilling station along the South Luzon Expressway in Biñan, Laguna.

The natural gas is extracted from the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power project in offshore Palawan, transported to the station nearest for compression, and transported again, this time as CNG, to the daughter station.

The start of the commercial operation of the CNG mother-daughter station means that the first 22 CNG-fed buses in the country are now set to start plying the Laguna-Calaca/Carmona and Batangas-Cubao/Lawton routes.

Those CNG-fed buses would be enjoying a more than 50-percent cut in fuel costs, as CNG to be sold by Shell was priced at only P34.32 a liter.

The operation of Shell's mother-daughter station forms part of the government's National Gas Vehicle Program for Public Transport (NGVPPT), a seven-year pilot program that will peg the price of CNG at P34.32 a liter, less than half the price of diesel, for participating buses operators.

The DOE expects 200 CNG-fed buses to be delivered to the country, 100 of which have already been allotted to accredited bus firms.

The accredited bus operators and their allocations include HM Transport Inc., 80 units; KL Transport, 40 units; RMOS Transport Inc., 20 units; and Premiere Line, 20 units each; Cervantite Express Inc. and CMC Vehicles Corp., 10 units each, and MR. Transport System Inc., five units.

Marasigan said the seven-year NGVPPT "will determine the economic viability of using CNG for public transport."

"We need to see around 2,000 buses by the end of the program ends," he said.

ABM COMPUTECH ENTERPRISES, INC.

14TH ANNIVERSARY

"Total Commitment, Excellent Performance for Business Innovation"

CELEBRATING 14 YEARS OF COMMITMENT, EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

August 23, 2007 marked ABM Computech Enterprises' 14th year of delivering total commitment, excellent performance and business innovations to the Philippine business solutions and consulting industry. This milestone was celebrated with a special anniversary event entitled "ABM at Teatinis: A Thanksgiving Concert and Awards Night" held at Teatinis, Greenhills. The main purpose of the event was to give special appreciation and recognition to partners, clients and employees alike, who have given and shown unending trust and support to ABM and its operations. The highlights included a special awarding ceremony and exciting musical performances by international renowned artists. The celebration was well-attended by ABM's local and global partners, customers and pool of employees.

1993 is the year that ABM began its drive to become a major provider of business software solutions carrying Platinum Accounting Software. ABM's thriving track record with Platinum Accounting Software fueled the addition of leading world-class business solutions to ABM's roster of products. Over the years, ABM has continued to create multi-solutions for the growing demands of every enterprise – from small and medium enterprises to organizations belonging to the Philippines' top 1,000 corporations.

As confirmation to ABM's growth and success in the industry are the numerous awards given by its global partners. Among it are Highest Annual Growth and International Sales Achievement Award from Epicor Software Corporation, Top Platinum International Distributor, Outstanding Sales Achievement, Asia, Highest Annual Revenue and Best International Sales Award and Outstanding Business Growth, Asia from Sage Software. On top of these, ABM won the National Consumers Excellence Award and was titled Outstanding Provider of Business Software Solutions, an award which is considered a trademark of quality and innovation in the Philippines.

Today, ABM's pioneering efforts have resulted to the growth of more and more businesses that undeniably contributes to economic recovery and nation building. It has sustained its growth and reinforced its proficiency in implementing solutions to various industries. With the successful completion of consulting and sales certifications of the best business solutions in the world namely BatchMaster Enterprise, e by EPICOR, Fourth Shift Edition, Manhattan Associates' Supply Chain Management, Microsoft Dynamics, Sage ACCPAC ERP, Sage MAS500, and SAP Business One, ABM has become the ultimate business enabler and strategic partner of successful companies. It has served over 700 local and international clients and has deployed consulting and programming teams to some well-known companies abroad in places such as Australia, Guam, California, Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea.

Now known as the one-stop-shop for world-class business software solutions with strategic backing from Bayan Trade, ABM has strengthened its hold of leadership in the market and is continuing to deliver the highest quality of service to its valued clients. It has a vision and great direction for the future and will continue to support and promote the Philippine business community in achieving world-class systems and operations through leading automated business technology applications for many more years to come.

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Ms. Ma. Christina R. Lescano
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Top Consultant Awardee

Mr. Lee Henry C. Salonga
Top Development Awardee

Ms. Mary E. Yarzo
Top Manager Awardee

Ms. Lilibeth R. Balucan
Committed to Excellence Awardee

Ms. Donnabel S. Jocson
Committed to Excellence Awardee

Mr. Lawrence A. Lusterio
Committed to Excellence Awardee

Ms. Charito D. Manuel
Committed to Excellence Awardee

Ms. Wilma E. Medallo
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Committed to Excellence Awardee

Ms. Kimberly R. Nevado
Committed to Excellence Awardee

Ms. Michelle S. Reyes
Committed to Excellence Awardee

Ms. Karen B. Tan
Committed to Excellence Awardee

Ms. Nerissa S. Vizcarra
Committed to Excellence Awardee

Mr. Diosdado Montaño
Rookie of the Year Awardee

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To 14 years
of leadership
and a new
family.
Cheers!

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By Rina T. Chikiamco

Sony Ericsson breaks ground with P1i

TIRED OF SONY ERICSSON'S form factors for the P series?

If you are, you can have a sigh of relief for the P1i has broken away with tradition, departing of the characteristic "flip" cover and ditching the full QWERTY keyboard for a compact version that is similar to the K800i.

Simple moves, but they make a world of difference.

In addition to enabling users less the dismissal of a flip cover on the 20 hours, it has a touchsensitive panel, which is smaller than the one in the P series. Sony Ericsson kept the touchscreen technology and added a jog-dial control that allows one-touch access to applications like music, games and multimedia, which is just nifty.

At the back is a 3.2-megapixel camera with auto focus and flash, and there's a secondary video camera up front for video calling.

There's also a multimedia player and FM radio. The 160MB of internal memory can be expanded by using a Memory Stick Micro card.

For connectivity, the tri-band device supports 802.11b and 802.11g WiFi, and of course, Bluetooth. But just like the rest of the P series, the P1i doesn't support HSDPA.

The P1i is also a new 88 lighter than the P990i, weighing in at 124 grams in contrast to its predecessor's 216g.

Functionally, the P1i runs the usual set of P990i applications, including personal information management software and Web browser.

As with all handsets, using Bluetooth and WiFi will eat into the battery life significantly, although hopefully not as quickly as it did on the P990.

All in all, the P1i makes good use of its slick heritage following the P900i and M600i.

THE P1i's screen is easier on the eyes.

Nokia set to hit high note with music-driven phones

ANOTHER SET OF MUSIC-DRIVEN phones is set to take the market by storm after Nokia's 5800 Xpress Music devices. The handset feature dedicated music keys for easy access to playlists without closing other functions, such as "texting" and browsing.

Accordingly, it is designed to "put" music front and center, making it easier than ever to carry a single device for music and communication.

The 5610 XM packs more memory, capable of holding up to 5,000 songs with a 16GB microSD card and has a 3.2 megapixel camera to boot.

Other music-driven phones introduced by Nokia to the local market were the N81, the N81 8GB and the N95 8GB.

The N81 and N81 8GB can store up to 6,000 high-quality music songs with music playback of up to 20 hours, while the N95 8GB offers up to 25 hours of video or up to 6,000 songs on its luminous 2.8-inch screen.

With dedicated music and gaming keys, 3.5mm headphone connector and 3G and WLAN connectivity, the N81 and its beefed up brother the N81 8GB are mobile entertainment powerhouses. The two are also configured to find, list, manage and play music and games from the Nokia Music Store and N-Gage game service.

In the meantime, the N95, which Nokia prefers to call a "multimedia computer," has been jammed up. Nokia kept all the key features, including a 5 megapixel camera with Carl Zeiss optics, built-in A-GPS for using maps to navigate, WLAN, HSDPA and an innovative two-way slide. But the N95 8GB, to the name implies, offers massive memory and great viewing on a luminous 2.8-inch screen.

Nokia's new wave of music-capable phones will be available in all Nokia Store nationwide. When said the company would be developing a larger distribution landscape through its own stores and partner distributors. Some 21 stores, including one in Enquirer (SM), Nokia is adding one in Southmall, one in Ayala-Cebu and one in Megamall.

Taking mobile phone once a step further, Nokia is soon to launch its Nokia Care Mobile Plus.

Going forward, When says music will continue to be at the forefront of Nokia Philippines' campaign in the coming months.

Nokia is a world leader in mobile communications accounting for about one-third of the global market. There are about three billion mobile users all over the world, 950 million of whom are using Nokia devices.

Elan T. Chikiamco

Traveling in style with Acer

TRAVELING IN STYLE, ESPECIALLY WITH your PC, is a must to those high-tech fanatics.

And the best possible travel companion one can have is an Acer TravelMate notebook, recently introduced by Acer Philippines Inc. for the so-called "telecommuter."

The Acer TravelMate laptop series this time top of the line TravelMate 6292-301G16 and the 6293-181G16, which are powered by Intel Core 2 Duo T7500 processors with Intel 965GM Express chipset.

Also introduced recently was the 8291 series powered by Core 2 Duo with Intel 965GM chipset and Intel 945GSE Express chipset.

The TravelMate boast of a 1GB DDR2 533MHz memory, Intel GMA X1400 with up to 358MB DVMT 4.0 GMD dedicated memory and 160GB shared memory) for clear-cut video clips and photo images on a 12.1-inch WXGA CrystalBrite TFT LCD screen—ideal for office presentations and video games.

Acer TravelMate 6292-301G16 and the 6293-181G16 carry 200GB 5400k hard drives, while the 6293-180512 has a 120GB 5400k hard drive. They all have dim anti-shock protection capabilities, guaranteeing a hardworking and durable hard drive for ensuing office and personal files.

The new Acer laptops display sleek, subtle yet stunning aesthetics with rugged layer for the cyber cool warrior executive, with its aggressive alloy structure that provides stability and protection. The units have embedded security protection feature like the Acer Bio-Protection Fingerprint solution that features five-Shot Authentication (FSA) Computer Protection, the Acer FingerPrint and Acer FingerSwitch for the 6292-301G16 model, which are expected to provide peace of mind in case of laptop theft or unauthorized use.

Acer TravelMate models have built-in Acer CrystalEye Web cams that support the Acer PrimaLite technology, the antiglare four 3D Dimensional pixel controls, Built-in Super Multi Double Layer support, and the exciting Windows Vista Home Premium operating system. TravelMate 6292-301G16 has the open-standard Linux operating system for consumers who are more at home with this system.

TRAVELMATE 6

Gadgets star in digital banquet

HP Compaq DC7600 ultra-slim (left), and the HP iPAQ hi 2100

By Raquel P. Gomez

THE NEXT GENERATION OF gadgets and commanding devices that will expand and further consume our mind, wireless and digital world were presented in a "digital gadgets banquet" prepared by HP for the Asia Pacific press event held at Pin Chi Mirah Bay in Vietnam.

The global IT company known by printers, desktops, notebooks, servers and handheld devices unveiled the latest products and solutions "tailored for the small and medium businesses" across the region.

Nokias and gadget aficionados had their first glimpse of HPs specially designed for the tough-Asian environment.

printers that don't require a long warm up but print right away, notebooks that have indestructible solid state drives, PDA phones and handheld devices that have swipe

HP iPAQ 912

fingerprint security, and affordable power efficient work stations for heavy graphics users.

"HP is announcing the latest suite of products for SMBs (small and medium businesses) in Asia Pacific with enhancements to its rapidly growing market, we can help them derive the most value from their IT investments, accelerate business performance and work save business dramas," said Adam Koch, senior vice president personal systems group, HP Asia Pacific and Japan.

With the aim of helping entrepreneurs in Asia Pacific to improve productivity and boost bottom line of doing business, HP introduced a range of desktop products that include the HP Compaq dc7600 Ultra-slim desktop PC which features a "sleek, zero-footprint design," or a design that allows for the small lightweight PC box to be connected behind the LCD monitor.

With soaring prices below $800, HP's xw4400 workstation features energy-efficient AMD Opteron processor Intel Core Duo processor and Intel chipset with 2D and 3D graphics technologies that makes it capable of driving multiple high-resolution graphics displays on several LCD monitors.

The HP nw8440, on the other hand, offers easier product with Intel Pentium Dual Core, Intel Core 2 Duo, or Intel Core 2 Extreme dual-and-quad core processors along with Intel 3000 Express Chipset, a memory controller hub architecture that optimizes memory and graphics. Installed video accelerator, like NVIDIA, PCIe X16, or ATI graphics support high performance 2D graphic displays. For connectivity to other devices, the workstation also features 12 USB ports and 6 SATA interfaces.

HP workstations all possess a "tool-less" chassis design, where internal components of the PC can be accessed easily for servicing without having to "unscrew" them out.

Koch said the company also came out with products specially designed for particular Asian markets, like POs that are rubberized the rough treatment environment in India and entry level PCs for schools in China.

HP is eyeing the tough market of handhelds in asia with the introduction of five more "smartphones" and devices—a pair of HP iPAQ rugged PDA mobile phones, pro-based PDAs, as well as a personal navigation device.

Positioned as a more every business communication unit for pocket, details, the new iPAQs run on Windows Mobile. It packed with all the office software essentials. It has a WiFi feature, as well as GPS navigation and HP Enterprise Mobility Suite (EMS).

The EMS allows for easy management of devices. It has a software update, locking and erase wipe out features that may be done outright on the device or through a software management. So if you lost the device, you can actually make it "unusable" for the "user" to use.

The 30-enabled HP iPAQ 912 Business Messenger with full QW-ERTY thumb keyboard, and 400-MHz-512 Business Navigator boast of 2 megapixel cameras and bright EASY-VIEW.

Offering mobile e-mail, voice and GPS navigation, both PDA handhelds allow users to conduct calls and access the Internet in places around the world via the 3G HSDPA, supporting quad-band UMM UPA/HSDPA technologies. The handhelds' integrated Wi-Fi net only allows the hot spot connectivity for surfing the Web, but also VoIP for Internet calls.

Featuring a high-definition 3.8 navigation screen, the HP iPAQ 112 Travel Companion is a useful device that guides and entertains a user literally out of the box, while helping him or her stay organized at the same time. It can use Google maps and Lotus notes. Find the exact address, URL and phone number of a location.

Traveling professionals will also appreciate the long battery life and tone-by-tone navigation via the detailed MP3 feature of the new HNQS. Also, the voice commanders feature called the Voice Reply allows for hands and eyes-free travel-ling and companion for ease.

"This unprecedented expansion of iPAQ products marks a new chapter for HP and demonstrates HP's dedication to the mobile space," says Dave Rollinshill, Handheld Global Business Unit, Personal Systems Group, HP. "Today's broad range of iPAQs built the foundation for mobile professional, student and adventure junkie to business users."

HP also introduced three new Intel Core Duo business notebooks—HP Compaq 2710p, HP Compaq 2510p and HP Compaq 8510p—with top power savings from $699 to $699. All three feature 64-gigabyte flash-based solid state drives.

This is the first time the company commercially rolled out notebooks with solid state drives. Solid state drives are proven to be shock-resistant making notebooks more reliable, power-efficient, and portable bulks.

With a renewed focus on Asia Pacific, particularly the growing business sectors of the region, HP is hell-on-wheels expanding and adding to its portfolio of products for the Asian consumer and emerging businesses, according to Koch.

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LIFESTYLE

Editor Cleto Batol-Formoso
Subsection Editor Linda B. Zulueta

"SUNSET Tanay, Province"

"BENCH and Tree Large Trees, Magnolia"

Stella Rojas' tender communions

By Jessica Zafra and Ruth Antiporda
Contributor

IN FRANCE, ONLY TEN miles of English King Richard I's castle remain. Known as Coeur de Lion or Lion Heart, he battled French monarch Philip II who sought to expand French territories in the 12th century.

The ruin has been chosen by Stella Rojas as one of her numerous subjects in her latest show, "French Illusion," in Gallery Nine at the ArtWalk in Megamall (tel. 9106656).

An oliven as she could, Rojas hies off to France where she paints plein air, or takes photographs to inspire her paintings. The affinity with the country is not surprising—she was, after all, the first Filipino scholar at Ecole d'Art in Aix-en-Provence in 1993. Her last se-

STELLA C2

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Praico and Obemio in visual duet

"PLAY" 2, by Ikael Obemio

RHENDA PRAICO AND IKAEL OBEMIO PRESENT THEIR "Several Models" at the Library Wall of L-Cel Gallery in Sweetdia, Residencia Global City, Taguig.

Praico's oils of metropolitan decay in the city and Obemio's expressionist yet light and dreamy subjects in watercolor make for a subtle visual counterpoint, Rhenda Praico is a graduate of University of San Tomas and Ikael Obemio of University of the East-Both majored in Painting.

Call 9931112 for details.

"RACE on Grecian Pastures," by Rhenda Praico

"BALANCING Act" 1, by Praico

"DREAMSCAPE" 1, by Obemio

Delicious murals

MURAL IS ONE OF THE OLDEST and most resilient art forms in history, with some of its earliest examples traced back to prehistoric times. Murals and frescoes are accepted art forms that can be found somewhere in between fine art and home painting.

The mural gracing the walls of Congo Grille, a family restaurant and weekend place, has provided customers with a repertoire of serving delicious Filipino dishes set in an exotic ambiance.

The restaurant has chosen an African-inspired mural to capture the jungle ambiance evoked by the name Congo Grille.

"The idea of transforming the interior of Congo Grille into real walks of art was sparked by our desire to provide our customers with more than just a delicious meal. We want them to enjoy the ambiance of our restaurant and relish the excitement, the adventure and the captivating images of our murals, the way they enjoy our food," said marketing supervisor Carla Villanueva.

Tapped to create these modern masterpieces was Beatrix Ty Ong, a young and talented graphic designer and illustrator turned muralist whose youthful approach helped provide a character of dynamism to the frescoes.

Ong design elements of African aesthetics, such as masks, weapons, headgear and textile patterns and mixed in with the playful qualities of animals, people and bright colors to contrast the earth tones. Ong has succeeded to paint murals that appeal to both young and old.

"The murals that Congo Grille wanted me to create were supposed to capture a exotic element of location, images, sense of place and essentially, entertaining ones. This is what I aspired to achieve in nearly every branch. But I added a bit of originality and uniqueness in each one, so no two Congo Grille murals are alike," said Ong.

MURAL at Congo Grille Tuktukan showcases majors created with a many-hands feel, rousing diners the minute one lays his eyes more appealing to lavish diners.

Panoramic

The results are works of art spanning several meters of wall space within each Congo Grille branch. In restaurants that have low ceilings, the murals are rendered in a more panoramic orientation to emphasize the width. But in others with more than ample wall space, vertical elements such as tree trunks were added to emphasize the size of the artwork.

The colors are determined by the ethnic motif with orange, green, brown, red, black and white being prominent, and the other tones used sparingly as highlights or accents. The texture and bluish gradient images that are striking yet subdued, carrying the viewers to take a second look and catch all the details.

Every the floor of the restaurant depicts carved "tanned tracks," providing the illusion that the animals depicted in the murals have come to life to leave their marks on the floors. Ethnic stylized masks cap the entire artwork, with replica spears and carved plants added to help achieve the effect of art becoming reality.

Among the finest examples of the Congo Grille murals are those in the El Pueblo branch in Ortigas Center, SM Mall of Asia and SM San Lazaro, Binangonan, SM Lucena, SM Telebastagan, SM Clark, SM Batangas, Westgate-Alabang and Tuguegarao.

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"MURAL Ong, the young muralist tapped by Congo Grille, stands in front of her towering masterpiece at Congo Grille Mall of Asia.

The antipodes of artistic expression

By Constantino C. Tejero

A CLEAR CASE OF polarity is Mata and Aaron Bautista's joint exhibit "Forms and Spaces," pieces in mixed media on canvas, recently in artspaces, 2/F, Glass Wing, Ayala Museum, Greenbelt Park, Makati Avenue, Makati City.

From the exhibit's title hints at the artists' polarity—of position from and negative space, the solid and the intangible, but to say the yin and the yang, or the respective natures and tendencies of the artists. By flatter in monochromes and layered backgrounds, she in multicolor and neat drawing—so two artists could be more apart.

Finally, of course, there is the antipodal modes of expression toward the figurative and the abstract, and of the precedence and the quiescence of the two modes. In a psychological twist, theorists represent the conscious (viewpoint) with clockwise, while Mata tries to capture the flowing and the unbalanced. Consonant, sound, harmony through figuration.

Mata, who took up Fine Arts at Far Eastern University, says she finds inspiration in the expressionism of Ang Kiukok and the Filipinism of Hernando.

Chiefly using a palette knife, she creates the female form with precisely drawn line and flat coloration to express her celebration of life. The pale blue of the face accentuates the warm harmony of "Summer Dance" in the same way the vivid red of the dress and umbrella strongly reminds the cool luminosity of "Purple" and "Cool Breeze."

Yet, the forms of the spiky hair and angular line of Ang Kiukok, had, and his expressive use of color and more of the festive hues of Lamarroza. We see the flowing line of Hernando, but the colors reminiscent of spice a more like Malang's. In all, that is not drawback it is fashionable.

"SUMMER Dance," by Mata

On the other hand, Bautista, who studied painting at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts, uses his approach to monochromes to approximate the method of his painting.

Presumably inspired by the chrome and concrete that dominate the Big City, he has created the "Cybercascape," "Concretescape" and "Concrete Bricoscape" series. These titles naturally sound big, are any less of chrome but speaks of cool, and less of concrete but more of paint.

In fact, these pieces look like painted walls, specifically a mixture of pigment and cement, which is typical of the look of many a postwar painting. But this

"CONCRETESCAPE (Red)," by Aaron Bautista, and (above) "Flutes," by Mata

"CONCRETE Perception," by Bautista

is less the impulsive style of Jackson Pollock and more of the guided brushstroke of Juliet Hollis.

The pieces lack the spontaneity of New York Abstract Expressionist but display the patient-making, determined line and planned composition of Cayetano Lyrico Abstraction.

This exhibit demonstrates two artistic echoes modes of expression may at first look diametrically opposed. Mata Bautista and to her decorative set and Bautista wants what heavy with forms find approaches found Realism—but by painting their pieces closely side by side and over the visual effect.

The space would appear to be an extension of the color planes of the background where her form is cut, and they'd assume a visual unity. Then you'd realize they really belong to each other.

tella Rojas' tender . . .

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Discover with an all-Pinoy treat Greenwich's Pizza Pinoy

Pinoys simply just love to eat. It's amazing how we can readily satisfy our craving however far-fetched it may be. Sometimes we can be so crazy that we take that long drive just to have a tasty bite or carefully plan our weekend activities just to try the specialty of some new restaurant. On occasions when we are left at home, we do not hesitate at the challenge of making innovations of our favorite dishes.

Truly aware of the vibrant Filipino palate, Greenwich recently captured that essence with the new Pizza Pinoy, a delectable feast that combines all-time-favorite Filipino meals of Vigan and Lucban Longganisa, Pampanga Tocino, chili fingers, mozzarella cheese, mushrooms, and onions, topped on Greenwich's new 9-inch garlic-flavored rolled-edge crust.

Known for its non-stop pizza innovation fused with a unique Pinoy twist, Greenwich is committed to offer the best-tasting pizza that suits the discriminating palate. Greenwich is confident that the new Pizza Pinoy will become an instant hit, especially for those who go for the distinct Filipino taste. Aside from offering the best to its diners, Greenwich certainly knows how to please its loyal customers.

"Greenwich is committed to providing delicious pizza and pasta products that suit the tastes and preferences of the young working adults. The Greenwich heritage of coming up with new, creative and innovative pizza has always been our driving force—starting from the Super Sisig Pizza, Red Egg Royale Pizza, Mango Fiesta ala Mode, down to its newest product, Pizza Pinoy," said Lulu De Castro, Greenwich Marketing Manager.

Pizza Pinoy certainly gives another new reason to rush to any of Greenwich's 245 stores. For delivery orders in Metro Manila, you can also call Greenwich Delivery at 5-55-55.

LIFESTYLE

Edgar Doctor in media mix

A new show synthesizes the artist's strengths and virtues

By Lisa R. Zulueta

CITY in Green

MIXED BAG" SHOWCASES Edgar Doctor's varied and dynamic handling of different mediums—watercolor (bane of many!), acrylic and mixed media.

The new exhibit conspicuously tends to become a retrospective, but it is not that simply because the drought is much too daunting for curators and collectors.

Like most great artists, Doctor is ambidextrous with mediums and materials: he may have gotten convincing acclaim in aquarelle, but he's equally skilled in acrylic, as well as in mixed and metal sculptures.

And, as his mastery of watercolor should indicate, he's adroit at both representational art and abstracts. He has the best of both worlds.

Make that many worlds. In "Mixed Bag" shown, not only does Doctor handle well different mediums and conventions, he also marries genre paintings.

The new rebellion, of course, is framed (onward)

"STILL Life in Red"

"CABIN World from My Window" (above); "Red Flowers in the Garden" (right)

Edgar Doctor . . .

From page D1

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landscapes, marinescapes and still lifes, which are easy on the eye of both collectors and neophytes. But again and again, the artist introduces a certain twist, a certain detail that makes each piece different from the rest.

The watercolor animescapes, for example, achieve a genuine effect similar like a Chinese panel painting. Meanwhile, the still lifes of bouquets are done in the modernist vein, with the fruits not so much clumped together, but strategically spread on the canvas, like geometric points, the seemingly haphazard deployment calling attention to itself by shadings and splashes, a contemporary on the artistic process that makes of the still life not so still, but so lived.

The florals, another favorite of collectors, display to fine effect the drip or splash effect of aquarelle, which literally makes the flowers bloom and explode into pinpricks of light, a sly wink on the impressionist's trick.

Framings and musings

But perhaps the newest twist in the show is Doctor's use of frames to provide a vantage point for the artist's musings, in the mixed media "Green World from My Window," an actual frame provides the edges of the artist's panoramic, thrilled and bubble and pseudo-really-expanding-by-infinity eye.

The same framing device is used in "Old City from My Window" (another mixed media), in which one of Doctor's favorite genres, the urbanscape, gets a dismal framework of darkness, as it were, to delineate or enumerate the urban sprawl and ennui. The result is an uneasy one distracted bodiless may have been restrained, but the feeling it gives off is one of unease and foreboding, like a rendition strapped for an electrocution.

All of this, of course, is tendentious if not agonized interpretation that may not exactly dovetail with the nonchalance and serenity one associates with the art of Edgar Doctor.

But as "Blind Rag" shows, Doctor the artist could also be Doctor the clinician, the experimenter, and the mood setter. Perhaps we've been pigeonholed from too early on that Edgar Doctor shows he has still tricks up his sleeve to surprise and shock us.

Edgar Doctor's "Mixed Rag" opens on Oct. 30 at the IG Corridor of Power Plaza Mall, Rockwell. The exhibit is mounted by Silverstar Gallery. Call 09209434307 or e-mail rpls@silverstargallery.ws

"NEWMAN Sage '07"

"Old City from My Window"

Our painted moment

By Kary C. Dimilin
Contributor

TO SEE THE WORKS OF LUNA, Hidalgo, Amorsolo, Fabian de la Rosa, Ocampo, Francisco, Manansala, Tabuena, Legaspi, Rivera, or Joya in one exhibit is to see how the masters of Philippine visual arts have imagined the nation in the 20th century—a time of wars and devastation, and a time ironically of burgeoning aesthetics and philosophy. Our experience of modernity is not without contradiction since it is an exciting time of limitless possibilities of the visual world but fraught as well by poverty and injustice.

Poet Charles Baudelaire declares the transitory and contingent character of modernity that comprises half of art for which the other half is the immutable. In these works of the masters the imagined nations or in set, imagi-nations, is primarily the fleeting image of who and what we are along with our simultaneous aspirations and the yearning for eternity.

For its second anniversary, Dexter Silverio Gallery, with Ateneo Center for Formative Research and Development mounts the exhibit "Masters" which, aside from the works of the artists above, also features works of Ahrens, Hendle Severo, Imao, Cabrera, Magnayon-Bo, Ingrid, Ingrid, Alcuaz, Cuerello and Orbina.

"Masters" is a fundraising activity for the training and formation of public-school principals all over the country.

In bringing teachers and artists together, the exhibit becomes a learning opportunity for all. Artworks are prolegomena of souls.

Amorsolo's crucial lesson, for example, assume a symbolic value with idealized peasant folks, stalwart youths and ever smiling maidens. With the incipient influence of impressionism according to critic Alice Guillermo, Amorsolo's warm tones capture the ethereal tropical sunlight which not only describes our country but somehow portrays our promising enlightenment.

Amorsolo's "The Burning of Idols" becomes the ethereal moment in our history. When surrendering our pagan past, we enter a world complicated by new forms of social relations and modes of production. Despite for Amorsolo, time teaches us that history is a series of dialectic movement and the burning of idols is just one of that arrow toward the growth of our collective consciousness.

He knew perhaps that his art would not go unchallenged and, indeed, in the early decades of modernism, Guillermo claims that artists would value expressiveness, make manifest the terrible and ugly, and expand the subject matter of art into controversy.

Ramon Tabuena, José Joya and Federico Aguilar Alcuaz are among the few who would carry the mantle of this modernist challenge. According to critic Rodolfo Dicen-Perez, Tabuena's images are the logical extensions and simplifications of the murals taken up by the so-called Neo-Realist group in the Philippines.

With his Philippine scenes, Tabuena depicts sights of remembered and dreamed things, where carabaos, for instance, appear weightless, lost in the midst of indeterminate atmosphere or elsewhere become men with unidentified visages. Tabuena reconstructs reality into a plastic structure with an elusive flux in modernity's Cubism.

Picture in his "Simbahan" and "Awake" with geometric faces, dimbed bodies and fragmented images, our history explodes in humanity to multi-angular views and becomes a poet's revelation in the process.

Joya tried to reach out to provincial universities and schools and introduce an appreciation in Bajong Bisay and Tondo. Joya would not only influence young painters but radicalize for art by introducing political painting in a number of large canvases in the 1960s but later would shift to compositions of rounded overlapping shapes in

"BURNING of the Idols" by Fernando Amorsolo

"PAKETEO," by Fabian de la Rosa

ETEL, file by José Joya

"BOBOLET and Lumens," by Federico Aguilar Alcuaz

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Regional art contest winners bared soon

PHILIP MORRIS PHILIPPINES manufacturing Inc. (PMPMI), sponsor of the Philippine Art Awards (PAA), is set to announce the first batch of winners from the recently concluded regional selections for Metro Manila and Luzon at the Museum of the Filipino People.

Starting this year, the PAA has been made much wider and grander as a result. Its annual event involving four Philippine regional competitions—Metro Manila, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

Ten equal winners are selected from each of the regional-level competition.

All of the 40 regional winners will then move on to compete in the national-level competition in February 2008.

Each of the regional winners will receive P40,000 and a trophy.

For the national finals, the grand-prize winner will get P500,000 and five Jurors Choice will each receive P100,000.

The national winners for 2008 will be treated to an all-expense paid trip to Hanoi, Vietnam, one of Asean's fast growing art markets.

"The unanimous response of artists to our call of entries over the years, and their confidence on the credible judging process used a museum standards collected in handling of their entries, have contributed to the duration of Philip Morris to continue supporting the Awards," says Philip Morris public affairs and communications manager Dave Dumlao.

All 40 winning works from Metro Manila and Luzon, which have been selected from a collective pool of almost 400 entries by this year's two panels of judges, will be featured in a month-long exhibition at the National Museum.

Managing director Chris Nelson says: "Philip Morris has supported the arts worldwide for the past 50 years. Sure assured that in the Philippines, our company will continue to support the arts since we acknowledge that the is a unique way for society to define, express and understand its experience. It is our commitment to introduce innovations to encourage Filipino visual artists to raise the standard and quality of their art."

Now celebrating its 12th season, the Philippine Art Awards has maintained its stature as one of the Philippines prominent contemporary two-dimensional art competitions and exhibitions.

Manuel at MOA

ADRIAN JAY MANUEL MOUNTS his fourth one-man show, "Composites," featuring textured abstractions that incorporate the use of different media creating an innovative artform, in which colors and lines can form composite groups. The exhibit runs until Oct. 31 in Area Orientes Gallery, SM Mall of Asia. Call 9917-5256877 or 5560590.

"COMPOSITE CXL" by AJ Manuel

MONDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2007 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER E1

LIFESTYLE

Musical feast for Sta. Isabel anniversary

Pianist Cristine Coyiuto handles well a challenging, if mind-boggling, program

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

SANTA ISABEL COLlege observed its 375th year anniversary with a special recital of one of its outstanding graduates, pianist Cristine Coyiuto, who earned her degrees in Piano and Music Education with singular honor as one of the school's very first magna cum laudes.

The school started as a school for orphans, most of them daughters of Spanish soldiers. Later it opened its doors to Filipino girls as well. It got its name by royal decree of Queen Isabella II.

In 1864, the Daughters of Charity took over the school, which was then in Intramuros. It later moved to its present Taft Avenue address courtesy of Mayor Vicente Reyes (then head of the San Miguel family), who offered some estate in the current so that the upstanders of rich-ship young girls would continue. Its First Filipino superior was Sr. Candida Granger, DC.

Its music program (Bachelor of Music, Master of Music in Arts Education, and Bachelor of Music) was later opened to boys.

In her recital, held at the CCP Little Theater, Coyiuto once again recognized the lovely played Lyric Pieces by Edvard Grieg, whose 100th death anniversary is being observed this year.

On the whole, it was a challenging, if mind-boggling, program consisting of Handel's Overture in G Major, HWV 424, and Rachmaninoff's Six Moments Musicaux, Op. 16, and Sonata in E Minor, Op. 10, the latter closing the program with called Andante Sostenuto.

The Handel opener—based on an eloquent theme and followed by 21 variations, several of them to ensure him—aside displayed the pianist as an eloquent interpreter of music in the Baroque period, like was able to bring out the piece's wide range of colors and the formidable dynamic progression. It was to her credit she was able to sustain her fluency with an accuracy sense of rhythm.

Grieg's Lyric Pieces Coyiuto delivered with musical insight, and here can was achieved into the composer's musical influences (Chopin, Schumann, Liszt and Mendelssohn) and his favorite people and events.

But in some sections of the 10 sets and opuses, it ing touched to come out like a poor copy of Chopin and Schumann; he seems as if struggling to shed off the influences of Mendelssohn and Debussy.

The rough technical demands of Rachmaninoff's Six Moments Musicaux, Op. 16, were obvious in the six sections of the piece, and here Coyiuto showcased the stylistic issues needed to project the opus.

If Coyiuto revealed to be highly lyrical in the Grieg recitals, she proved a strong technical hand in the metal Rachmaninoff numbers with its demands for virtuosic supremacy. She made it unscathed but it was obvious the piece had demanded on it.

RUBRICA

A diary novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA

A. LIPIN

PUGAD BABOY

BY PAT LINGA

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

KYOKO AND WENDY

BY LYNN GARCIA-LANG

GOVERNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHICHILO

EKO MACHINE

BY PATRICK ARRIBAS

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

	1	2	4					
	7		2			1	4	9
	6	3	1			5		8
						3	5	4
	4			9			6	
1	2	5						
2		4			6	7	1	
7	5	6			1		8	
					7	4	3	

Difficulty Level ★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

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Answer to previous puzzle

4	5	8	9	3	7	1	6	2
3	6	9	1	8	2	5	7	4
2	7	1	6	4	5	9	8	3
1	3	5	7	9	8	2	4	6
7	9	4	3	2	6	8	5	1
8	2	6	5	1	4	3	9	7
6	8	7	2	5	3	4	1	9
5	1	3	4	7	9	6	2	8
9	4	2	8	6	1	7	3	5

NATIONAL Book Store's Socorro Ramos

AUTHORS Rina Hilaza, Pina Pedro, Rony Virtucio, Joy Buensalido, Charlie Agpaoy, Frankie Raman and Mac Edralin

Pioneer PRs tell their stories

A VIVID MEMOIR AND BOOK-20 collection that helps part the curtains of a profession that is still scarcely understood as it is celebrated, "How to Make It in PR: PR Veterans Tell Their Stories," edited by Buenzo Virtucio, was recently launched at PowerBooks Greenbelt 3.

PR pioneers Charlie A. Agpaoy, Joy L. Buensalido, Rina J. Eclalla, Pina E. Hilaza, Mary A. Pedro Jr., Virginia G. Montañez, Frankie A. Raman, Socorro S. Villadolid and Romeo F. Virtucio provide personal accounts of their careers through engaging, sometimes amusing stories of people, the motives they've learned from, and the values they have lived by.

The collection also features a foreword by former J. Walter Thompson chair J.J. Calero, who says "A great wealth of experience is contained in these pages. This book is recommended for anyone who is in the communications business."

Author, Concept Communications and the International Public Relations Association (Ipra) Philippine Chapter (which counts as members among the authors) had done a mini launch attended only by a few of the authors, their immediate families, J.J. Calero, and Ipra members Willie Ocampo and Angel Lim-Ignacio.

A bigger and public book launch was jointly sponsored by publisher Concept Communications International Inc. and Ipra Philippine Chapter at PowerBooks, which was graced by National Book Store matriarch Socorro "Nenay" Ramos.

The event was well-attended by Ipra members such as Sarah Raquel of Glink 7, also the president of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP); Karen Villanueva of Hitch, Mary & Debbie; Hilton de Quiroz of Full Circle Communications; Edd Fuentes of Fuentes Publicity Network Inc.; Richard Burgos of BBH Philippines; and Bobby Manansala.

Other notable public relations and communications practitioners present were Nina Jacinto of Luis & Anni; Tally Villanueva Ong of Campaigns & Grey; Jingjing Romero of Stratos; Noel Nicer of Precipitainy; Sammy Enriquez of Firm Goods Inc.

Other guests included family and friends of the authors such as Gabi Pelaez; Axel and Tessa Virtucio; Audrey Agpaoy-Gutierrez; Monique Agpaoy-Ignacio; Rose Pedro; Linda Edralin-Benaflorne; Dr. Alfred Buensalido; Monique, Joel and Jason Buensalido; Grey Hawe, Dakin and Phoebe Nieva; Leo Gonzalez-Jacinto; Lawyer Dick Feuer of Makati Medical Center; Hot Issues Sarbelo, Billie Bellanti, Ramona Diaz, Alice and Andie Delvaux, Grace Lanuzong, Gaiter Mercl, Lani and Camille Camillan, Christine Grandinetti, Rica Ribon Perez and Chet Martinez of Ipra.

The book is available at PowerBooks and National Book Store. Call 7244774.

Rep restages 'Fiddler on the Roof'

TO CELEBRATE ITS 40TH year, Repertory Philippines is restaging "Fiddler on the Roof" at Greenbelt 5, Makati City.

"It will be nostalgia for many Rep subscribers and there is a whole generation that hasn't seen this musical theater classic," says director Baby Barredo. "Also, the message that it sends is as relevant today as it was 40 years ago. Besides, the music is some of the most memorable for the stage and deserves to be heard again—sung, live, by the voices and throats of theater artists of the story."

Apparently both Broadway and West End feel the same way, because it has been revived over and over."

Rep will introduce Tyler Allen Ilkhod as Tevye, the happy milkman and father of five daughters who sings the popular song "If I Were a Rich Man." Abigail Sisucaran, one of Manila's finest actors, also stars as with him.

Cuddle, his wife, will be played alternately by Joy Virata and Pinky Marquez, both seasoned musical theater actresses.

Other roles will be played by rising young theater actors Nicole Matabais, Cito Villanueva, Vanessa Pandelis, Cass Ibarrola, Felix Rivera and Hans Eckstein.

An exciting new talent, Reika Ramirez, makes her first appearance in Manila alternating with Samantha Bernell in the role of Tzeitel, the eldest daughter.

The leads will be supported by a strong ensemble of Rep actors, among them Jaime del Mundo, Rodgers Montalbo, Oliver Edson and Boyd Tinio. Violinist Reida Rabajante is The Fiddler.

Barredo has solid studies a unique approach to Perin the Matchmaker, alternating with Joy Olivarez.

Barredo and Bobbie Gurrea co-direct and Jake Soriano choreographs.

The music will be played by the Manila Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Arturo Molina.

Rep's "Fiddler on the Roof," written by Joseph Stein with lyrics by Sheldon Harnick and music by Jerry Bock, runs Nov. 9-Dec. 16. Opening night will be sponsored by St. Joseph's College, whose it all began for Rep 40 years ago.

For ticket information, prices and show dates, call 8917970 or visit www.repertory.philippines.com. Tickets are also available at Ticket Whole (tel. 891-9999).

Musical feast . . .

Pretongue E1

continue stories of exemplary tastes from her.

Young cellist

Cayetano's other side as an excellent chamber musician came to the fore in Rachmaninoff's Sonata for Cello and Piano, with young cellist Ismay. It was an even partnership with the cello just as dominating as the piano, neither contradicting or competing with each other.

But the composers bring a piano friendly, it did sound in some parts that the strains had more defining moments for the piano than for the cello. Ismay had exemplary moves in the allegretto part and some trending lyrical moments in the andante section. On the whole, Cayetano and Ismay achieved commendable balance.

So I was making to another appointment. I missed the encore numbers and the surprise appearance of the pianist's daughter, Caitlin Abo, who played Rolling's Waltz Suite Part 7 of the Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano.

Classical guitarist

Classical guitarist Alvaro Pierri's performances in Montreal got both popular and critical acclaim. He was soloist in Rodrigo's Concerto de Aranjuez with the McGill Chamber Orchestra under Boris Brott.

Earlier, he appeared with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra under Charles Dutoit. La Presse Montreal noted a wonderful collaboration: "Pierri demonstrated not only perfect virtuosity but also extremely creative musical interpretation."

Another critic, Les Brouwer, noted Pierri had more musical ingredients to offer than Segovia and Bream, and declared: "Pierri is a master of colors, a genuine innovator of interpretation."

This guitar master will be heard in Manila for the first time on Dec. 6 at the Philamlife Theater, courtesy of the Chopin Society of Hong Kong and the Philippine American Life Insurance Company. The same maestro will bring in the ninth musical return engagement of Iranian pianist Ilya Stashkevich on Dec. 8 with an entirely new program inspired by dance.

For tickets, call 8927633 or 09063109270. Early-bird discount is still available.

CLASSICAL guitarist Alvaro Pierri will perform in Manila in December

Bach concert

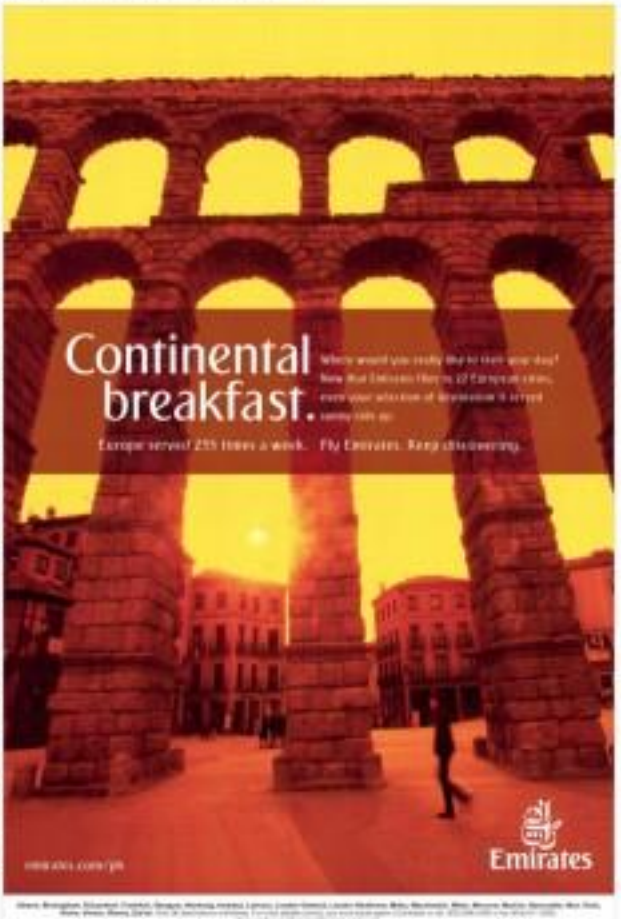
"Back to Bach" featuring Bach concertos for one, two, three and four keyboards will be the attraction at the Francisco Santiago Hall, 800 South Tower, on Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m.

Featured pianist are Najib Ismael, Peter Barcenas, Mary Anne Espina, Marsha Mendoza, Vincent Siron, Julie Ann Hallinger, Jed Balmaceda, Mary Anne Chiaro, Andrew Soriano, Helen Reyes and Allan de la Cruz.

Vienna-based pianist and conductor Aylon Cecio will lead the UST String Ensemble with Gina Medina as concertmaster.

For tickets, call 7314832.

COPYLEFT with cellist Antonel Ismay



'El Filibusterismo' from Gantimpala Theater

THE FINAL INSTALLMENT OF Gantimpala Theater's four-(Continued from page 1)

of "Noli Me Tangere." Directed by Dexter Doria, disguised as the wealthy jeweller Don Simeon (Border Gonzaga). Dhalia-stunned by the absence of the friars and government bosses, Ibarra abandons his fiancée in order to return to his hometown of San Diego and start a bloody revolution.

The cast includes Perry Dizon (Don Custodio/Tasio/Ibarra), Jorge Cabello-Eleut Tiqui/Bot Ziplf), Jhrey Rosales (Kabesang Tales), Kimberly Diaz (Juli), Lani Tapia (Doña Victorina/Maria), Fatima Tamalaraw/Juanito Pelaez/Sisa Irene), Rhannah Rosos (Imgani) and Lalainie Aceo (Isaac Ghetto Gomez), Jeffrey Canaleg (Padre Camorra), Ronald Concepcion (Padre Fernandez) and Billy Bajao (Padre Salvi).

Sonic Topacio directs, with Perry Dizon as assistant director. Rodrak Valle as production designer, Andy Villareal as lighting designer, Andrew Alcoza as stage manager and Pamela Bautista as production manager. Gantimpala artistic director is Nely S. Espejo.

Performances are on Nov. 9 (7 p.m., Concert at the Park Open Air Auditorium, Loyola, Marikina); Nov. 9-11, 23-24 (10 a.m. and 2 p.m., AFP Theater, Quezon City), and Nov. 16-17 (SM Southmall Cinema 8, Las Piñas City).

Call 8905740 or 8963003 for tickets or e-mail gantimpalaproductions@yahoo.com.ph.

PDI, RayBan to launch "You Could be the Next RayBan Rock Star"

The Philippine Daily Inquirer recently signed a memorandum of agreement with Branded Lifestyle Inc., distributor of RayBan in the Philippines to launch "You Could be the Next RayBan Rock Star." Present during the signing are Pepita Clarte, VP for Advertising of PDI, Rene Reinoso, SVP for Sales and Marketing, PDI, Mylene De Jesus, Sales Officer, PDI, Lal Gopwani, VP of Branded Lifestyle, and Devi Leano, assistant general manager of Branded Lifestyle.

Women and art

Anna Cabra-Makk is an indefatigable artist with a secure technique and unquestionable musicality

By Allan Pacurza
Contributor

WHEN, DURING THE ADVENT OF the Industrial Revolution, the pianoforte took its place as one of the unmitigated symbols of the new century, the various schools of pianism came to the fore of diversity in performance.

A most curious division among pianists, however unfounded, is a gender-biased assumption which unfortunately some people are still inclined to believe.

A long time ago, I sat before my first live performance of the Piano Concerto in B-flat Minor (Leonard Bernstein) at the CCP. The featured soloist was a female pianist whose name escaped me, partly due to the impending disappointment I was to get during the entire concerto, which musicians enough at the onset, in her opening chords against the blaring "brio" — that is, if it ever truly reached my ears.

Anna Cabra-Makk performed the same concerto years later, and anybody who claims it might have felt anything but shortchanged. Despite the fact that the piano she used that night was an abhorrence, I am quite sure what I heard was as solid and powerful a playing as any male pianist I had ever heard.

Raw energy

Her most recent homecoming concert at the PCI Bank was no exception. The sensitive nature of her playing may easily be mistaken for tasteless abandon, but soon one notices this raw energy to be a proper channel for insight and exciting musicianship.

She started off with her Scarlatti sonatas, admirably performed in their characteristically simple elegance—concept-wise and sound-wise. The Sicilo class representations in the quiet lyricism of Isolina Ickoff's Baroque renditions.

Though I usually prefer the rambling, mechanical playing of a Gould or a Tureck, following that quasi-stoic evocation closer to the tradition, Cabra-Makk's was far from being pedantic. What with that disciplined leggiero and a sound reservoir of lines, it was a strong combination of beauty and intelligence.

This then was Schubert's "Wanderer" fantasy which, surprisingly, is rarely performed, at least in this part of the world. There are probably only a handful of pianists who can pull off a Schubert with such economy of intention (because one stroke in excess for me is mere pretense) and a considerate measure.

Romantic idiosyncrasies can be distasteful in Schubert, that she is much aware of. Her lyricism was perfectly tapered, the sound falling into place with an elegant ease that complements her playing in the more virtuosic parts.

She opened the second part of her program with Rachmaninoff's Etudes-Tableaux, Op.33. This is where the obvious marriage of technique and art materializes itself.

Naturally, these studies allow any performer to showcase that rare-fold aspect of any aesthetic endeavor, but, Cabra-Makk saves through every piece with deftness and a clear concept of the desired sound and effect.

Admittedly though, the level of intensity she started with got lost somewhere in the last number (the one in C-sharp Minor), not necessarily dwindling to (but aside) inside (and lost somehow, rather unexpectedly, lacking the immediacy and vigor of her usual attack.

Unmatched

What more can the enthusiast ask for, when after all the pieces mentioned above were masterfully played (I daresay) by one of the few local pianists who might have truly deserved an "international" status, she still decide to close her program with Prokofiev's Piano Sonata No.3?

Here, Cabra-Makk's energy was unmatched. Her fiery playing was very much there as I suddenly remembered my first experience of her playing as a small concert at UST, as a time when I never thought anybody could play Liszt's "Dante" sonata the way she did it.

The eclectic tendency of an audience is not a myth at all. Kissin's endless encores in his BSO/MSO concert was never a myth.

Anna Cabra-Makk is probably the most generous I've seen when it comes to encores. She could be doing a full program of more than considerable difficulty and still indulge the audience by playing Schubert-Liszt's Soirées de Vienne: Valse-Caprice No.6.

Since the audience was clamoring for more after her standing rendition of the Prokofiev sonata, she played Liszt's "Tarantelle" from "Venezia e Napoli" then followed it with Chopin's posthumous Nocturne in C Sharp Minor.

Anna Cabra-Makk is an indefatigable artist with a secure technique and unquestionable musicality. Like a modern-day Scheherazade, she makes artistic communication a matter of patience and the ultimate conveyor; sheds or seems (hereafter, subtly renders the entire process capable of expressing non-sentiment beauty in itself in extraordinary genius.

I suddenly recalled Emily Dickinson's standard for judging literature, which fittingly describes the experience of watching this amazing pianist anytime. "If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry."

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Sam has nothing more to say on Lolit exposé

SAM MEARS TESTED ME ALL THE way. From Cannes to regarding his rift with Lolit. Sorta. "I have nothing more to say. I've said my piece on TV. I just want to focus now on my time here in Canada."

Sam is one of the more patient celebs I've met. Whatever we happen to be in the same room, he would approach me just to say hi. So if Tita Lolit claims she ever hurt such, Pinky as Stalked, it's no out of character for Sam not to greet her at all.

Tita Lolit should have taken time to talk her self phone contacts for private home evidence. Prove it or prove it. Pray tell, Jobal!

What's cooking!

I heard that beauty queen Josephine Cunningham, who recently gave birth to her first child with a married actor, is a new talking up valentary one.

Is she planning to shift her business from a beauty parlor illustrated by the dream star? to a diner? Or does she just want to whip up some hearty chicken for her partisans?

As they say, the best way to a man's heart is through his stomach. But how can his martyr with stomach all that?

Guess who

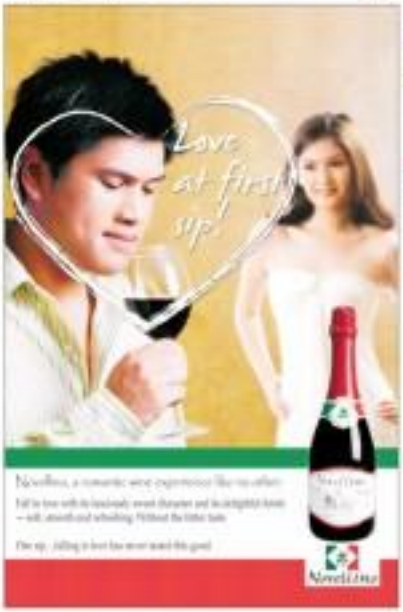
A popular actor and a male modeling search winner are gossipmen. People in the know insist that their clandestine gaze on behind closed doors.

Now before the model runs the search, the actor already showed interest in him. Aside from learning calories together in the gym, could passion be brewing between them now?

Jampacked Flow

Had a blast at the third anniversary

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Anne Carvajal



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	4 PERCHIK THE PEDICAB DRIVER & MURDERER	5 FRANKENFEET	6 RENDITION	7 LUST CAUTION
GREENBELT 1	1 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL		2 RENDITION	
GREENBELT 3	1 RENDITION		2 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING	
	3 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	4 THE GAMEPLAN	5 LUST CAUTION	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THE GAMEPLAN		2 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	
	3 RENDITION	4 THE 10TH KIND	5 LUST CAUTION	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 DECEMBER BOYS	2 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	3 EVERMORE	4 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE GAMEPLAN		2 LUST CAUTION	
	3 RENDITION	4 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	5 THE UNREST	
TRINOMA	1 LUST CAUTION	2 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	3 THE UNREST	4 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
	5 STARDUST	6 RENDITION	7 THE GAMEPLAN	

AT THE MALLS

Glorietta — Halloween Treat: Dorothy and the Witches of Oz — A Fantastic Musical Theater Performance — October 28, 3pm to 8pm | Glorietta Activity Center

Greenbelt — Trick or Treat at Greenbelt 1 Park — October 29 to 30 and 31

Alabang Town Center — Area Pumpkin Carving Contest — October 28, Town Plaza

Ayala Center Cebu — Clear Product Launch — October 27 to 28, Activity Center

Market! Market! — Sesame Street Party — November 2, Activity Center

Crostagio — Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids — August - December 2007

Ayala Museum — CHRISTY Mail-order Nights — September 14 to October 28, 2007, Museum Store

Tri Noma — Sesame Street Party — October 28, Activity Center

glorietta Greenbelt Alabang Town Center Ayala Center Cebu Tri Noma

Printing life.

PRINT TOWN

Vina Morales on love life: Wait and see

By Marinell R. Cruz

ASKED ABOUT THE STATUS OF HER relationship with Chinese businessman Cedric Lee, Vina Morales says she is enjoying a warm and sexy attitude.

"There are still a lot of questions that I never answered," she tells reporters (interviewed at the launch of Star Records' latest dance albums, "Sexpedalistic"." But, she adds, "If you're asking if we're happy and in love, the answer is yes—sobra, sobra."

In March, Vina announced she was breaking up with Cedric on the show his talk program "Ber Nats." She said the relationship had become "very complicated."

To that date, Cedric's marriage has yet to be annulled. He and his wife Judy have two kids, aged 11 and 8.

Now, Vina says, she's awaiting the outcome of the annulment proceedings.

She is confident about where the search "I don't look at it as a big problem. It's rather encouraging on my career—and it's been going well lately," she insists.

Vina recently won the Asawa Ikaw woman competition held in Kuala Lumpur. She brought home the first Asia Performer trophy, plus $25,000 in cash, a recording contract and concerts bookings all over the region.

"I'm thankful that my fans care more about my career than my love life. Alam[ko] naguab ang personal life ko, okay lang sa kanila," said Vina.

"Sapakalaro" is a various-artists album co-produced by RSAP Music and Star Records, and features 14 dance tunes performed by Kapamilya talents. Apart from Vina, the album features Gerald Anderson, Gabriel Valenciano, Iya Villania, Shorg Navarra, Sassy Agsala and Mickey Perz, Bitoy Cabs, Full Circle Scots, "Showtime" Alif Teik, Ultimate Dance Star and Rickey.

Sam has . . .

From page 01

of Vina Rodi's exercise party place. It was a three-day celebration dubbed "F3 (Fun for the Famous)."

The main was on and that I almost forgot. I went to Manila. Nadia to my beloved friends Cedric and Angel Lining for rebuilding the party scene in Darling country.

The event coincided with the birthday bash of Rodi's fab Philippine Tatler correspondent Sonya Vlaemas.

Among the Bongga participants in the jampacked fete, it was the gas cousin of Socialites Barretto (Jasmine Curtis) who stood out.

And she went with Chloe & Celestina gone. A fashion designer who studied in Paris and London, Jasmine shows that being chum runs in Leon's family.

Now to the place to be in Rodi—Ocean and Heaven overflowing there!

New endorser

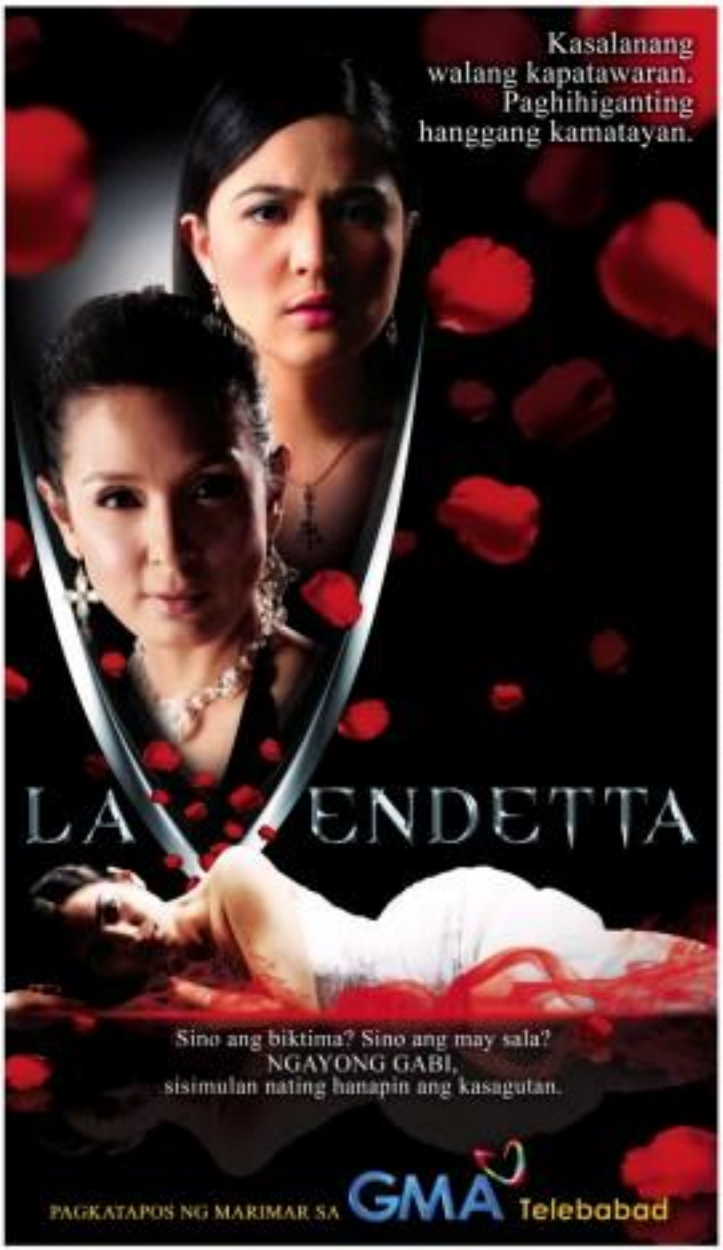
Anne Curtis is the new face of Penshoppe—a dynamic fashion brand for hip, young women. Just like the clothing line, Anne consistently reinvents herself. She can be girly and classic, or turn into a rocker chick.

Anne will first model the holiday collections designed by Mel Orlina (www.melorlina.com).

Anne is always dressed for the part but when, oh when, will she wear her hair curlier down? Still there really SARRIling going on between her and Sam Milby?

Personal. Madonna girl na admiral is Angel and Gel Luring, Nash Pegolet, Pauline Hemaring, the staff of Dit Ba Hotel especially John Norman dela Cruz, and Jasmin Mauer Hotel for an overdose of Bongga hospitality. Rodi will always be my second home because of all of you. Maraming-ra gal home!

E-mail: sstarlightdeluxe@yahoo.com



Life after 'Idol'

Three finalists of the singing competition's first season team up to form a vocal group

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THERE IS LIFE AFTER "Philippine Idol," according to the reality show's finalists Apple Chiu, Kim Dingle and Anna Cruz.

Among the Top 12, the three were consecutively booted out one after the other on the show's first season last year on ABS-CBN 2.

Anna left on the 6th, Apple on the 7th and Kim on the 8th week.

"It was like a sign from God that we were meant to be together," recalls Kim.

Months after the show, the trio, along with other batchmates, would often hang out, practicing routines and outing one another.

Soon enough, "Idol" writer Paolo Bautista thought of putting the trio together in a vocal group called SBA, with Jon Lacanienta (formerly of Mojofly) as musical director.

The Top 12 contestants always keep in touch, says Apple. "We support each other."

"We watch each other's shows," Anna agrees.

"Quite recently we visited the 'Idol' set to watch the launch of [fellow 'Idol' finalist] Jim [Muñoz]," Kim recounts. "Jim was a big help when we were rehearsing for our ABS gigs."

In fact, Jim surprised his friends by showing up at ABS's interview with buzzcom funnyman Mr. Rocket after runs in Cinemalk 2.

They share singing assignments with each other, too.

"I recently drew in Batangas was arranged by [fellow finalist] Dear Thaiza," Apple relates.

For Kim and Anna whose relations are far sunny Jim's in Australia, Anna in Candaba pa, their "Idol" batchmates eventually became their surrogate family during and after the competition.

"We were together for nine months, through all the trials. We went through a lot," Anna recounts.

Apple was doomed by dengue right before the first performance night; Kim, by throat infection in the heat of the competition.

"It was due to the pressure," Kim explains.

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Donald trumps Jolie and Clooney

WHILE PROMOTING HIS NEW BOOK on TV recently, Donald Trump stirred up a firestorm over of controversy by dissing current icons Angelina Jolie and George Clooney.

He dismissed Jolie as a previously starred out wanted who lasted two videos and "weird" relationship with her brother and ex-lover, more recent one with Billy Bob Thornton, and yet Trump successfully seemed himself one an interna-tional do-gooder and certified protector of disastrous-ruined women and children.

Clearly Trump wasn't sold on the genuineness of Jolie's motives for choosing up low act and climbing of other's mound of himself.

As for Clooney, Trump said the actor's "bigger than life" screen image was a complete translation.

He recalled that, when he first saw Clooney in the flesh, he was stunned to see how short and small the "world's sexiest man" really was. Dutch.

What was the point to Trump's despite-humbled bashes? At face value, he was dishing viewers the supreme service of enabling certain some down to size, the better for them to avoid being ridiculed a bigger similar slide. On the other hand, the resulting controversy should also enable him to tell more copies of his new book. Ah, so ...

Trump is not without, that's for sure. The big question now is, what will Jolie and Clooney do to get back at him? If they hit back, it would make things hotter—and that better is for his book-selling purposes not controversial.

So, their best move is to do—absolutely nothing. That would make the controversy as hot as yesterday's coffee, and the aggrieved stars would end up trumping Trump—for a change.

'The 11th Hour'

Viewers who vote for the environment are happy that Leonardo DiCaprio has produced and narrated "The 11th Hour," a half-hourly documentary on how we trashed but salvaged the planet. Earth, and what must be done now to save humanity.

Trouble is, the film is proving to be difficult to track down. Perhaps because it isn't destined to be popular viewing fare, it is being moved from theater to theater on different days.

We understand the commercial-free, educational intended, so we urge concerned viewers to look at the movie's "accessible local" screening schedule in newspapers, and catch it as best they can.

This extra step is OK for people concerned about environmental issues to take—but what about the average Juan/Pedro. He wouldn't care enough to "chase" the movie all over town, so its important message may not reach him. Now, that's a great pity.

Therefore, we urge the film's local distributor to give it on a regular basis on movie channels. To ensure lots of good business, we also urge teachers to assign "The 11th Hour" as required viewing fare for their students.

The movie viewers are full of as much fluff and stuff that has little positive impact on us. "The 11th Hour" is definitely more significant and important than most productions, so we trust that our theater owners will give it the regular showcase that it deserves.

VIEWFINDER

Annie L. Favre

Why John Ford Coley loves sad songs

By Fortuito Cuenyuson

TAKE FIVE

One of his favorite tunes is 'Can We Still Be Friends'

THERE WERE TIMES BETween 1970 to '79 when the Texas-born, pop-rock duo England Dan & John Ford Coley had four of their songs on top of the Billboard chart.

Brad Fiscus, regardless of their musical tastes, must have loved these songs on radio: "It Really Love to See You Tonight," "Said to Belong," "We'll Never Have to Say Goodbye Again" and "Love is the Answer."

Suddenly shunned as a one-hit wonder, the duo actually had four "big" hits and their albums accumulated for a Grammy, received triple-platinum and gold records, and released eight albums.

After breaking up in 1981, Coley wrote music for film and TV. He also enjoyed a brief acting stint in the movies. In 1986, he went back to recording and continues to do so. He is also in Manila recently for a series of shows—actually his fifth visit ... and counting.

Are you working new songs?

I'm working some, but I haven't written much recently because I've been gone too the road so much, and the kids always want to play too. ...

Can you recall memorable times with Dan?

Dan Seals and I went to high school together, played in the same band, and started England Dan and John Ford Coley in 1971. I wrote a book called "Backstage Pass" but it's not about sex, drugs and rock n roll—more of the funny stuff that happened while we were touring. One night after a show, this lady walked up to me, holding a copy of one of our albums, and we are by the band and said, "My fiancee and I fell in love with your song 'Nights are Forever' without you." We showed to it, he proposed while it was playing, we did everything to that song. ... I just said, "Thank you." But then that same woman looked at me and, in a voice that I didn't recognize, would come from her, said, "And then he left me. I've hated your song ever since."

One of my more memorable moments by the way occurred right here in Manila. Two years ago, we're just come from a tour of the post-Soeharto palace and were sitting in a restaurant in Makati, having dinner. All of a sudden, I heard the loudest explosion I've ever heard in my life. It was the bombs that went off on Valentine's Day and I was about 100 yards away. We played at Hard Rock Cafe that night.

How do you feel 30 members album on tour?

Every time we do tour, I take my kids with me. I did it Israel, with TV and homage to have a good time, too. But I also take the kids out. I'm a history nut, so I go around and find out what things happened in a particular area. Compare to know a lot of Philippine history from World War II.

What was your greatest fulfillment in the group?

We've had our share of success and earned good money. But that's the part and you can't bring it back. I like looking at where I've been and what I'm gonna do in the future. That way, it's exciting for me, it's fun. I still enjoy meeting different people and hearing about their experiences.

What are your musical influences?

I was trained in classical music and listened to Bach and Beethoven, and also lots of church hymns. Beach Boys, Buffalo Springfield, Supertramp ... I just soaked it all up. It's song's got a great melody, message and, that it's kind like it, I don't like it.

What else's you like?

I don't like rap. I tried to have a fit in opinion about music and my attitude to that: if you like it, you're right. If you absolutely hate it, you're right, too. It's a matter judgment.

Whatever happened to Dan?

Dan stays with his brother Jimmy Seals (of Seals & Crofts). Right now, Dan's got his problems. I got to talk to his manager and find out how he's doing.

What caused the breakup?

It was time to move on. We were beginning to move in different directions musically. Dan wanted to go to country-folk type and I didn't. When "Love is the Answer" came out, we thought, okay, that was the time we'd quit while we're on top.

But aren't you into country music now?

No, no sounds. I played some country and Texas when we left. But I couldn't do what he does. I also love Andy Gibb fans. But if somebody were to ask me to sing what he does, I would be able to. Even if they held a knife to my throat and say "We're gonna kill you if you don't," I still wouldn't do it.

What has the music business taught you?

I don't have much regard for the record industry because there were a lot of talented people who were left behind. And I don't like some of the choices they've made and what they've turned the industry into. There's no passion, it's so predictable now.

Are you saying that "No music was made before"

Yes no, no.

Which do you think were the best written songs of your period?

"Can I Be Still Be Friends" by Todd Rundgren; "The End of the Innocence" by Don Henley; and a sad song by Bonnie Raitt.

Why do you like sad songs?

I don't know, maybe because I'm Irish. I have a lot of Irish blood.

GENERAL ADMISSION ALL SEATS ARE RESERVED

2ND WEEK

WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM...

COULD HAPPEN TO YOU!

JAKE GYLLENHAAL REESE WITHERSPOON

RENDITION

Life after 'Idol'

Principle A1

They had no choice but to have to rock off to the other ones form.

They insist that they've gone through "general evaluation" — that "Idol" is moving to ABS-CBN in its second season.

Also confirm: "But we are mostly happy and excited for the next batch. We know that they'll get good exposure on GMA-7. We're looking forward to their audition so that we can relive our own experiences."

Any "plus for perspective" "Idol" segments?

"I learned to say 'no' to myself and say no, no," Jon says. "And to walk through criticisms."

"You really have to be fit because the contest is a test of endurance. You have to be really physically, emotionally, spiritually," says Apple.

"I also advise contestants not to read blogs. Actual negativity because the one take you from performance," adds Kat.

"One thing I learned from 'Idol' judges Ryan Cayabyab is to be versatile. To try out other genres apart from the one you're used to," says Jon.

Now that they've learned pro, they can put to good use the lessons of "Idol."

"We explore different genres in our gigs, but we also sing our own kinds of music," says Jon.

ASAP performers at Cloud and Heaven on Eggan Center every Monday, of Seventh Note in Makati every Tuesday, and at the Sky Lounge of Diamond Hotel every Thursday.

But will they allow friends and relatives to join the second season of "Idol"?

"I want to encourage my brother Armand," Annie says. "No one with me when I said [no] at first time. He made it to Star Top 40. What heaven? He may end up in the Top 12 this time."

Anak TV relaunches Batang Brodkaster

THE ANAK TV GROUP ANNOUNCES THE relaunch of "Batang Brodkaster," which is soliciting video materials written, directed and edited by youths 18 years old and below using inbound gadgets or simple multimedia still phones.

Entries should be original one to give member video materials with themes ranging from various social issues like the environment to poverty to playful topics about their pastimes, pets and profiles of their favorite persons.

Winning entries will get the chance to be aired on TV and receive gifts from sponsors.

Those interested to join may visit the Southeast Asian Foundation for Children and Television website at www.anaktvweb.com.

Deadline for submission of entries is on Nov. 29.

'Sesame' day

Viva Video invites kids to "Play With Me Sesame," a day of learning activities for children featuring favorite Street characters Elmo, Cookie Monster and Bert and Ernie.

Every purchase of two Sesame Street VCDs or one DVD at any Viva Video retail outlet entitles buyers to vote ticket for the event. Each ticket is good for one child and one paying adult.

The event kicks off at the Market Market on Nov. 2 and 3 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Nick's Halloween

Nickelodeon celebrates Halloween with "Mischief Makers" at the Mega Mall of the SM Mall of Asia on Oct. 31, 7 to 9 p.m.

A haunted school, fun and games, costume contest and Nick characters from The Fairies, SpongeBob SquarePants and Patrick Star complete the event.

For tickets, visit participating Toy Kingdom and Toy Bayan stores and purchase a minimum of P1,000 worth of goods until Oct. 31.

KID FIT

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

JOB Market

YOUR CONNECTION TO BETTER PEOPLE, BETTER JOBS

Safe, sound and southbound.

On the way to the South for a roadtrip? Prepare for a safe, reliable and enjoyable journey all the way to your destination. With a little help from Caltex, the Philippine National Construction Corporation (PNCC) and its partners, going south will now be more secure, convenient and fun for you and your family.

Oil industry leader Caltex and PNCC will travel with you through Ka-Road Trip mo sa Kalsadahan, a project that will provide travelers going through the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) an ideal journey, relieved of a year-long program, Ka-Road Trip will surely be a traveler's best friend in and off the road as it covers motorist assistance, public awareness on road safety and a Caltex pitstop at Alabang that will surely be a relief for weary travelers.

As you travel southbound this long holidays period, you will notice that being safe doesn't have to be boring. You can have fun while getting the point that safety is important. You will find highway safety messages along the SLEX route such as "Mabilis pero hindi liwa sa buhay. Drive Safely."

Or how about this line, "Huwag gumto magkamot, buntili ka ng kalsayan! Drive Safely, kalikasan." PNCC and Caltex, both proponents of safety on and off the road, are looking forward to a trouble-free, accident-free road trip for motorists.

Ka-Road Trip 2007 will kick off with a Pre-Departure Campaign on October 21 to 26, focusing on the need to prepare and check the pre-maintenance and safety of vehicles to be used for the road trip ahead. Selected Caltex stations in Metro Manila and nearby provinces will be visited, campaigning and efforts; their FREE Car Inspection Check Up. There's a handy list of the items that you, as a responsible driver, should check before going on your journey.

You must check for your car's:

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These safety checks can be availed at the following Caltex service stations:

And for the peak travel period, or close to the observance of All Saints' Day from late October to early November, when heavy traffic and the influx of motor vehicles is expected, travelers who depart to Ka-Road Trip on October 31 to November 4 will get a shot at a safe and fun-filled journey through a series of motor tune-safety checks that will surely help them on the long drive ahead.

Travel Time Safety Services

Caltex and PNCC will also provide free emergency assistance during peak travel period, particularly on October 27 to November 4. The two companies will coordinate with other groups such as the Philippine National Red Cross, Metrowatch and SA Philippines in setting up service booths and kiosks where medical, towing and mechanical assistance will be provided for stranded travelers.

Recreational Activities

Ka-Road Trip is made even more special by the Caltex Pitstop recreation booths at the SLEX Caltex stations. Caltex will set up remote kiosks and booths wherein customers can avail of special offers, freebies and prizes from the Star Mart convenience stores. To top it all off, resting motorists will also get to participate in fun games, some of which are related to the Caltex-NBA Canadian promo. And for a limited period, selected Mt Bonaki bikers will be giving away coupons that will entitle the holder to some freebies from the nearby SLEX Caltex stations.

Also, GFIs will also be setting up their own "Barkay Biyahe" booths at the SLEX Caltex stations to monitor the traffic situation and lend assistance to motorists plying the route.

With Caltex, PNCC and your loved ones all set, it's sure to be one stress-free All Saints' Day break. Avail of the free pre-departure services now and get ready to go southbound safe and sound in no time.

www.caltexwithtechron.com

What Drives You

Having a safe and secure roadtrip

Buckle up and get ready to enjoy the road trip this coming holiday season. Caltex and the PNCC come together to ensure that you reach your destination safely through their Motorist Assistance Program called "Ka-Road Trip Mo sa Kalligtasan". You can be sure to have your friendly Red Cross volunteers and the EA Philippines' towing assistance service with their reliable mechanics on duty. And if you happen to pass by a Caltex station at SLEX, your favorite Star Mart convenience store is there to give you a hassle-free pitstop for your favorite goodies and, if you're lucky, some freebies!

What Drives You CALTEX

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION

Star

Havoline

METROWATCH